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HISTORY OF THE TOWN
OF
OXFORD, CONNECTICUT

BY
NORMAN LITCHFIELD
AND
SABINA CONNOLLY HOYT, PH.D.

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Oxford in 1838

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DEDICATION
TO THE MEMORY
OF ALL THOSE
WHO HAVE LIVED IN,
AND LOVED
THE TOWN OF OXFORD

With grateful acknowledgment to the following residents, who, because of their affection for, and pride in Oxford, sponsored the publication of this history:

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FOREWORD

The town of Oxford comprises some of the loveliest scenery in the State of Connecticut, but no poet has arisen to sing of its beauties; no world-shaking events have occurred within its boundaries, and hence many histories have passed it by with but casual reference. Nevertheless, in it have dwelt many people who lived lives of bravery, persistence, and intelligence; qualities characteristic of New Englanders, and in one way or another have left behind them some record of their doings, which, though often fragmentary, when put together tell a story of no mean interest.

No extensive history of Oxford has hitherto been compiled and it has seemed to the writers that the time has arrived for the undertaking of such a project. For the past year or more they have been examining such histories as there are, town and church records, old documents etc., and have talked with some of the older people about their memories and those of their grandfathers.

As Oxford was for many years a part of the old town of Derby, one must for some records turn to such publications as the "History of the Old Town of Derby" published by Orcutt and Beardsley in 1880, and to Abel Gunn's contemporary record of happenings in early Derby, which was copied, carefully and painstakingly, word for word, in 1901 by the Derby Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

In 1885, W. C. Sharpe started what was to be a history of Oxford, and in that year issued a slim volume entitled "History of Oxford, Part First". It contained little but church records, births, marriages, deaths etc. It was not until twenty-five years later that he published a second volume. He seemed to have recognized then that it hardly constituted a complete history, for he named it "Part two, Oxford Sketches and Records". This second volume contains many interesting records of events and people but makes little attempt to tie them together into a continuous account.

Mr. Sharpe had taught school for a while in Quaker Farms and later became the proprietor and editor of a newspaper in Seymour, Connecticut called "The Seymour Record" for a number of years following 1871. He became much interested in local history, writing a "History of Seymour", "Seymour Past and Present" and numerous articles in "The Seymour Record", in which references are made to Oxford. Other publications containing some record of events in Oxford are Timothy Dwight's account of his "Travels in New England", Barber's "Historical Sketches of the Towns in Connecticut", Rockey's

"History of New Haven County" and the "Commemorative Biographical Record of New Haven County".

The present writers have endeavored to portray, as nearly as possible, the daily life of the people of old Oxford. The community at first was purely agricultural, with its people busy clearing fields out of the heavy forest. Life was then one of mere subsistence. There followed some years of ocean borne commerce through the port of Derby, carrying farm produce to other colonies and to the West Indies. This was followed by wool-growing which was given impetus by General Humphreys at Humphreysville (Seymour). This continued until his death and was soon thereafter abandoned, probably because of the introduction of the cotton gin which made the production of cotton textiles more profitable than that of woolens. Small manufacturing then grew up in factories along Little River and Eight Mile Brook, but this petered out with the coming of the railroad up the Naugatuck Valley.

After this there came a time of desultory produce-farming which expanded later, with the introduction of the motor truck and electric milk chiller into modern dairy and chicken farming. These have been Oxford's chief industries up to the present day.

And now the town seems approaching the status of a regional suburb, in which a large part of the population work in one of the many factory towns from Bridgeport on the south to Waterbury and farther at the north. The coming of these new citizens, who are keenly interested in the Oxford of today, makes this portrayal of the old life timely.

We have dedicated this account to "all those who have lived in and loved Oxford", feeling that here is a record in which all townspeople, native or newly arrived, can equally take pride.

For errata (1967) please see p. 318

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CHAPTER 1

THE MEN WHO SETTLED MILFORD AND DERBY

Oxford, Connecticut, was originally part of the town of Derby, and Derby, in turn, was an outgrowth of the town of Milford, Connecticut. It seems well, therefore, at the outset to consider who the men and women were, who came from England, and finally settled in Milford, Derby, and eventually in Oxford. While the fact is well known that the Pilgrims came to New England in 1620, other immigrations that followed soon after are not so familiar. One group came to Boston in 1637 from Hertfordshire, England, led by the Rev. Peter Prudden. In Boston they joined another group who came from London a few weeks earlier, headed by the Rev. John Davenport and Theophilus Eaton. Boston at that time was in the midst of religious disputes in which the new groups did not wish to be involved. They decided therefore, not to remain in Boston, and sent out scouts to find a good place to settle.

The arrival of the two new groups in Boston coincided closely with the end of the war with the Pequot Indians "These merchants desired a fine harbor and good commercial situation. And the reports of the men who returned from hunting the Pequots told them of just such a spot at Quinnipiack on Long Island Sound. Here they could carry out their plan of putting into practice a theocratic ideal even more rigid than that which obtained in Massachusetts, and arrange their civil as well as ecclesiastical affairs in accordance with rules to be obtained from a minute study of the Scriptures." So, the next year, 1638, the two groups sailed away together from Boston to Quinnipiack, the voyage taking it is said, two weeks.

At Quinnipiack, the Prudden group was given a separate allotment of land, known as the Hertfordshire section, but apparently they were not entirely satisfied there. Some time after arriving in Quinnipiack, Mr. Prudden had been asked to visit Wethersfield and preach there, which he did for some weeks, and endeared himself to many of the people. In 1639, some of the Hertfordshire group joined with some of the Wethersfield people under Mr. Prudden's leadership and formed a new separate settlement on the Wepawaug River, which they named Milford.

The first recorded appearance of Englishmen in the vicinity of Derby was in 1642, when some workers employed by a Mr. Wakeman were engaged there constructing a trading house to deal with the

Indians. By 1654, some of the Milford people had pushed inland to the head of navigation on the Housatonic River at Derby, and formed a settlement there which was known as "Paugasuck" after the tribe of Indians living in that district. This was in the district between the Naugatuck and Housatonic Rivers, later known as Birmingham. The name Paugasuck was soon applied also to the settlement on the east side of the Naugatuck River, and before long the settlers had altered the name from "Paugasuck" to "Paugaset". The very first settlers there seem to have been Edward Wooster, Thomas Langdon, and Edward Riggs. In the spring of 1655, the settlers in Paugaset made application to and were admitted by the New Haven Court "into the jurisdiction of a village".

Soon there came to Paugaset a young unmarried man, Abel Gunn, who "having a good handwriting and a talent for business", commenced keeping a record of public events in a book. By 1901 this book had become very dilapidated and in that year, the Derby chapter of the "Daughters of the American Revolution" copied the records faithfully, including Gunn's somewhat untutored spelling and punctuation. We refer to this as "The Derby Record Book". Gunn recorded that by 1667 "the inhabitants of Pagaset are as folet, Ed Woster, frances french, Joseph Hawkins, Samuel Riggs, Ephriam Smith, Abel Gunn, Stephen Person, Jerymiah Johnson". It is interesting to note that men of the same surnames came to the Oxford district only a few years later. By 1675 the settlement had grown so that the General Court of Connecticut granted it "the powers and privileges of a plantation, with the name "Derby". It was so called presumably after the town of Derby in England, although just why this was done is not too clear, as the early settlers were chiefly Hertfordshire men. One of them, however, Henry Tomlinson, came from Derbyshire, England. It is not unlikely that he suggested naming the plantation after his home town in England.

Gunn records the formation of the plantation of Derby in 1675, "A Court of Election held at harford may 13, 1675 (missing) of Joseph Hawkins and John Hulls (missing) to have the (missing) of a plantation granted to the inhabetants of Pagasett (missing) abought 12 families settled thar all ready and more to the number of Eleven preparing for Settlement forth with And that they have ingaged a minister to Come and settle Among them Speedyly and have expended abought one hundred pownes in preparing a hous for the minyster this Court for thar incoredgment Doe grant them the power and privelidg (missing) a plantation and for thar Bownes this court Doe Reserve power in their hans (?) to settle thar Bownes ---- and the New town going up at Mattatuck ---- The Commety apoynted by this court to the settlement of both the bownes and distrobusion of the Landes, ---- wch Commety is Captain john Nash: Cap. Wil: Curtice: Leu: tho Munson: the plan tasion of Pagasett is by this Court Named Derby." The

territory of the town of Derby as granted by the General Court in 1675, but for which a satisfactory charter was not obtained until 1720, extended from Two Mile Brook on the South, twelve miles north ward, and on the southern boundary, eastward from the Ousatonic two and a half miles, and on the northern boundary, seven and a half miles, making an area of about fourteen thousand acres in the original township. (This included all of what is now the town of Oxford.)

THE FAMILIES IN DERBY IN 1675

By 1675, about twelve families had settled in Derby; the History of Derby listing them as:

Edward Wooster
Francis French
Joseph Hawkins
Samuel Riggs
Ephriam Smith
Abel Gunn

Stephen Pierson
John Hulls
Jeremiah Johnson
Jabez Harger
Ebenezer Johnson
John Tibbals

Those "intending to come in forthwith" and who had received grants of land, were:

Mr. John Bowers
Deacon Abel Holbrook
Nicholas Camp
Joseph Hawley
Moses Johnson

George Beaman
Henry Tomlinson
Jonas Tomlinson
Henry Botsford

Among these names are the following which later became identified with Oxford:

Wooster	Riggs	Harger
French	Hawley	Johnson
Hawkins	Gunn	Tibbals

The first recorded use of the name "Derby" is dated May 21, 1675, and says "The inhabitants of Derby have granted to George Beman a home lott". Persons wishing to settle in Derby had to conform to certain rules. The original method for accepting settlers was to give the land, consisting of a four acre home lot, ten acres of upland, and four to six acres to make a meadow. Then the man had to build a house and fence his home lot, and reside four years, meeting other town claims of taxes. In 1679 the town changed this rule, voting that "hereafter persons taking up land (granted by the town) shall pay the purchase price whether they reside on it or not". To become an "admitted inhabitant", he had to be of "honest conversation", and a godly man, and must take an oath that he was not a Jew or a Quaker or an

atheist. Women, apprentices, servants and lawbreakers were specifically excluded from participation in government.

"To be promoted from the status of an "admitted inhabitant" to that of "freeman" having the right to vote for higher officials, or run for office as magistrate or representative in the General Court, required further qualifications. For this he must be approved by the General Court either directly or through the action of an authorized magistrate, and take the following oath:

THE OATH OF A FREEMAN

"A. B. being by the Prudence of God an Inhabitant within the Jurisdiction of Conectecott, doe acknowledge myselfe to be subiect to the Gouerment thereof, and doe sweare by the great and fearefull name of the euerliueing God, to be true and faythfull unto the same, and doe submitt boath my person and estate thereunto, according to all the holsome lawes and orders that there are, or hereafter shall be there made, and established by lawfull authority, and that I will nether plott nor practice any euell agt the same, nor consent to any that shall so doe, but will tymely discover the same to lawfull authority there established; and that I will, as I am in duty bound, mayntayne the honour of the same and of the lawfull magestratts thereof, promoting the publike good of yt, whilst I shall soe continue an Inhabitant there; and whensoever I shall giue my voate or suffrage touching any matter wch conserns this Comenwelth being cauled thereunto, will give yt as in my conscience I shall judge, may conduce to the best good of the same, without respect of prsons or favor of any man. Soe helpe me God in or Lord Jesus Christe.

Aprill the Xth, 1640."

(from COLONIAL RECORDS OF CONNECTICUT, 1636 - 1665.
volume I. p. 62)

It will be noted that a "freeman" did not necessarily have to be a church member, as was required in Massachusetts. It is said that the total number of Freemen in Connecticut averaged less than one-third of the inhabitants, but they nevertheless constituted the real control of the colony. It is interesting to find here that property qualifications as a right to vote were not gotten rid of until 1845.

Very shortly after being given the "powers and privileges of a plantation", Derby began having trouble in getting the inhabitants to attend Town Meetings, and on August 8, 1675, a Town Meeting imposed a fine of sixpence on any person not coming to a meeting within a half-hour after the time appointed and a fine of one shilling on any man staying totally away from a meeting.

As someone has said, the history of places in New England is

inseparable from that of its churches. The Ecclesiastical Society and the town government were practically the same, and the churches were truly "meeting houses" where secular meetings were held as well as divine service. The record of the "gathering" of the church in Derby follows: "At a town meeting att Derby; feb: 25: 1677: The Lord haveing By his Providence called a company of his Pore Servants into this corner of The wilderness: calls on us first to Seke the Kingdom of God And the Rituasnes thereof put severall persons upon the inqueary of ye town for there fre will and consent to gather A church att Derby and to walke in a church way and Sett up the ordenances of god according to gospell Rules as nere as we can attain According to our best light; The Town haveing had Two meetings about the same.

"The first all ye inhabetants were willing and gave there consent in ye thing; att ye second meeting Which was on feb 25, 1677; All Gave their consent by word of mouth not to hinder Soe great and soe good a work but doe Incorreg to Set upon it and will help to maintain if settled and give their consent to aske counsel and consent of ye Naithboring Churches in order to a church Gathering."

By 1681, when Oxford began to be settled, the families established in Derby on the west side of the Naugatuck River as near as can be ascertained, were: Joseph Hawkins, John Pringle (later spelt Prindle), William Tomlinson (son of Henry Tomlinson), Samuel Brinsmade, Samuel Nichols, Isaac Nichols, John Hubbell, Henry Williams.

As we have already recorded, in 1675, there were but twelve families in the entire town. The war with France, 1689-1697, sometimes known as "The Ten Years War" had a quite perceptible effect on Derby and its prosperity, for during this time the tax payers increased only two and the Grand List increased only one third of the whole, and during the next ten years the increase was about the same. For twenty years ending 1709 the increase was only eleven, and most of these were raised in the town, but few coming in, some going out, and a few dying. The amount of the General List of estates (i.e. assessed valuation) for the town of Derby as sent to, and preserved by, the General Court, possesses special interest as showing the very gradual growth as to property and persons in the town:

Year	Amount	Persons
1685	£2941	38
1695	1804	42
1700	2109	51
1705	2749	65
1709	2856	49
1710	2927	not reported
1720	4287	" "
1725	5310	" "

The above list includes of course those persons living in Oxford. So it will be seen that when settlers began to arrive in the Oxford district around 1680, Derby, though fairly well organized as a "plantation", was still a very small place.

CHAPTER 2

THE SETTLING OF OXFORD

It is difficult to establish the exact date of the settling of Oxford, because there was no concerted movement at a given date, such as at Woodbury. The latter took place definitely in 1673, when a group of people in Stratford became dissatisfied with the church conditions there, and left that town under the leadership of the Rev. Zachariah Walker with the avowed purpose of founding a new town.

The settling of Oxford, on the other hand, was simply the normal pushing further inland by individuals, perhaps one at a time, chiefly from Derby, with others from Stratford and New Haven. It seems well to pause here to consider the general state of immigration from England. Charles I. became King in 1625, and almost immediately, strife arose between him and the Puritans, and in 1628 he began "his experiment of governing without a parliament", and for eleven years, until 1640, no parliament sat in England. It was during the twenty years from 1620 to 1640 that the great migration to New England occurred, and by the latter date, the population of New England had become some 26,000. But after that, for more than one hundred years, there was no further extensive migration to New England.

The Hertfordshire group had come to Boston in 1637. Now, assuming that the average age of the persons comprising that group was around 30 years, then by 1675, when the Paugaset settlement took the name of Derby, their average age would probably have increased to 65. Therefor, the men who beginning in 1680 came to settle in Oxford, had probably been born in this country. As they grew up, many of them found that land was taken around the older part of Derby, and so they went further inland for new land, and thus settled Oxford gradually without receiving any great augmentation by immigration from England.

The earliest record of a settlement in the Oxford district appears to be that of Ensign Samuel Riggs, to whom a Derby town meeting held January 14, 1678 granted liberty to take up twenty acres of land at or near Rock Rimmon, in what is now Seymour on the west side of the Naugatuck River. During that year, Major Ebenezer Johnson, Jeremiah Johnson and a few others also purchased small tracts of land at Rock Rimmon, near what is now called "Pine's Bridge". As evidence that there was a number of settlers in Oxford before 1680, this notation is given in the record, that in that year "it had become necessary to establish town bounds of Derby (in the northern part of

Oxford) and Waterbury (then known as Mattatuck)". This would not seem to have been necessary if there had been only an occasional settler in Oxford at that time. Other settlers coming to Oxford in 1683 included Abel Gunn who on April 30th of that year was granted ten acres of land "up the Little River above Naugatuck Falls on the west side of the Naugatuck River, and Joseph Hawley who sent word June 4th, 1683 that he would come up to lay out his land at Quakers' Farm on the next day. A description of a layout made March 27, 1688 of 170 acres for Lieut. Johnson states that it was at the place commonly known as the Quakers' Farm. On April 24th, 1699, Samuel Riggs' land was laid out on Five Mile Hill and the description refers to lands of John Hulls and John Tibbals on the south and to that of Widow Denman, showing that persons already owned property there.

In 1711, John Chatfield had his division in the swamp upon the Five Mile Brook, on the north side of the Woodbury path (Route 188). In the same year, John Tibbals had land on the west branch of the Five Mile Brook, on the east side of Woodbury Road. North of him was Samuel Riggs and John Hull. In 1711 also John Hull had land in Quakers' Farm Purchase on the east side of the country road, not far from Quakers' Farm, on the east side of Woodbury Road, and south Samuel Riggs" So it is evident that by 1711, quite a little settlement had sprung up on Five Mile Hill, not far from the Quakers' Farm. In 1711 also, John Pringle had land on Goodhill "west of Eight Mile Brook, east of Samuel Nichols' land". On the other side of town, on December 9, 1700, John Twichel had his pasture laid out in the rocks above David Meadow, so called.

All of these settlements above recorded, appear to refute that statement made in the "History of the Old Town of Derby", that "the first permanent settlers at Quaker's Farm was some time after 1707". Sharpe takes notice of this statement in his "Oxford Sketches Part 2," and says it was an error, and that "it is evident that the twenty miles between Derby and Mattatuck which includes Oxford was considerably taken up by settlers". In 1711 a committee was formed to lay out the lots on the Quaker's Farm Purchase.

In 1722, Abraham Wooster purchased lands at Quaker's Farm and "erected a mansion house, and also had a saw mill, and soon after, the Griffin, Perry, Hawkins, Hyde, and Nichols families settled here." While these men were taking up their lives in Oxford, one action was taken by the General Court of Connecticut, this was that it changed its name in 1698 to The General Assembly and divided into the Upper House and Lower House (now the Senate and House of Representatives).

Another interesting event was that on April 5, 1700, Derby agreed to send to Woodbury and Waterbury men to run the perambulation between "them and us". This appears to be the first recorded use of the word "perambulation" for the viewing and checking the town bounds,

and we note that the word is still in use for the periodical check. A list of Freemen in Derby about 1708 follows; "a list of the names of the freemen in Derby viz; they that have taken the freeman's oath:

maj. Ebenezer Johnson	Josiah bolding
Mr Joseph Moss	Deacon Abel Holbrook
ensin Samuel Riggs	Deacon Isak nickols
Mr william Tombleson	Joh theobals
Lef; Thomas Woster	John daves
Ens: Joseph hulls	John chatfield
William washbon	Stephen person sen
daved wooster	Jeremiah Johnson
Johnson	Joseph Hawkings
henery wooster	John Pringle
Ebenezer harger	timothy wooster
Efraim Smith	Samuell nicols
mr John Durand	Samuell brinsmade
John Riggs	John nathan lum
Samuell bowers	Edward Riggs
francis french	Jeams hard

Of the above, the following names appear in records of the Oxford district: Moss, Riggs, Tomlinson, Wooster, Washbon, Harger, Smith, French, Nichols, Theobals (Tibbals), Chatfield, Hawkins, Lum, Hard (Hurd)

CHAPTER 3

THE INDIANS AND DEEDS THEY GAVE

During the early years of the settling of Derby and Oxford, Connecticut, while it had no actual Indian warfare, nevertheless stood continually in more or less fear of it, by incursions from the north.

In 1689, William and Mary came to the throne of England, and war was declared with France, and the French governor in Canada urged the Indians to hostilities. The Governor of New York appealed to Connecticut for assistance to protect his northern borders from invasion, and Connecticut sent a company of soldiers to Albany. Later, another detachment was sent to aid the Massachusetts settlers upon the Connecticut River. Connecticut supplied men and ammunitions liberally for an unsuccessful expedition against Montreal.

“In 1693, another Connecticut company was placed at the disposal of the Governor of New York, and in 1694, a tax of one penny on a pound was levied for the defense of Albany. The war was very burdensome for Connecticut, mainly to defend the borders of her sister colonies, her expenditures for that purpose amounting to about one tenth of her grand list.”

Then in 1702, there came the war between England and France, known as the Queen Anne's War and in this country the French and Indians attacked the settlements in Western Massachusetts and in 1703 occurred the infamous Deerfield massacre. These events must have been uncomfortably close to the settlements in western Connecticut.

But in Derby and in Oxford itself, the white settlers had no trouble with the Indians, who do not seem to have been a warlike tribe. They were known as the “Paugasucks” or “Paugusetts”, the tribe being a large one, occupying a considerable territory on both sides of the Housatonic River, extending from Oyster River, which separates Orange from Milford, all the way to Fairfield. On the west side of the Housatonic River, the Paugasucks claimed all the territory now comprised in the towns of Stratford, Bridgeport, Trumbull, Huntington, and Monroe. On the east of the Housatonic they claimed as far north as Beacon Hill Brook, which overlapped the hunting grounds of the Tunxis, as the Indians of Farmington were known.

One of the chief seats of the Paugasucks was at the “Great Neck” between the Housatonic and the Naugatuck Rivers in the vicinity of what later became known as “Baldwin's Corners”. There was a large

open field at this place, frequently referred to as "Indian Field". The proprietorship of the land around Derby seems to have been divided between the Pootatucks and the Paugasucks, the lands of the Pootatucks extending on the west and south of the Housatonic and those of the Paugasucks east and north of that river. Nevertheless, they signed deeds interchangeably.

Derby early established the practice of purchasing land from the Indians, who seemed to have been willing to sell, and even urged the white man to buy. The latter had goods that the Indians desired, and which could be bought for cash only, but in making the transaction, the Indian thought apparently that the transfer of ownership would not prevent him from continuing to hunt and fish on that land. When the white man began to build walls and fences, and to bar the Indian from his former haunts, he felt defrauded, but it was then too late. From 1665 onward, the Paugasuck Indians sold lands, piece by piece, to the Derby people, until the town bounds reached Waterbury and Woodbury on the north, some time prior to 1680. The deeds from the Indians often overlapped, and apparently several pieces of land were sold to the town three or four times. Some twenty-five or more deeds are recorded with one hundred or more different Indian names attached thereto, the last deed being given in 1711. As usual among Indians, the tribes were headed by a "sachem", who generally had one or more assistant chiefs under him. There were termed "sagamores". In the "History of the Indians of Connecticut", the autographs of some Indians are given, which are reproduced in the illustration herewith, #8 Ansantoway, #9 Towtanemo:

Those who signed these deeds:

For the Paugasucks:

Ansantaway, Towtanemo, Ockenuck, Atterose,
Ahuntaway, Nanawaug, Cockapatona

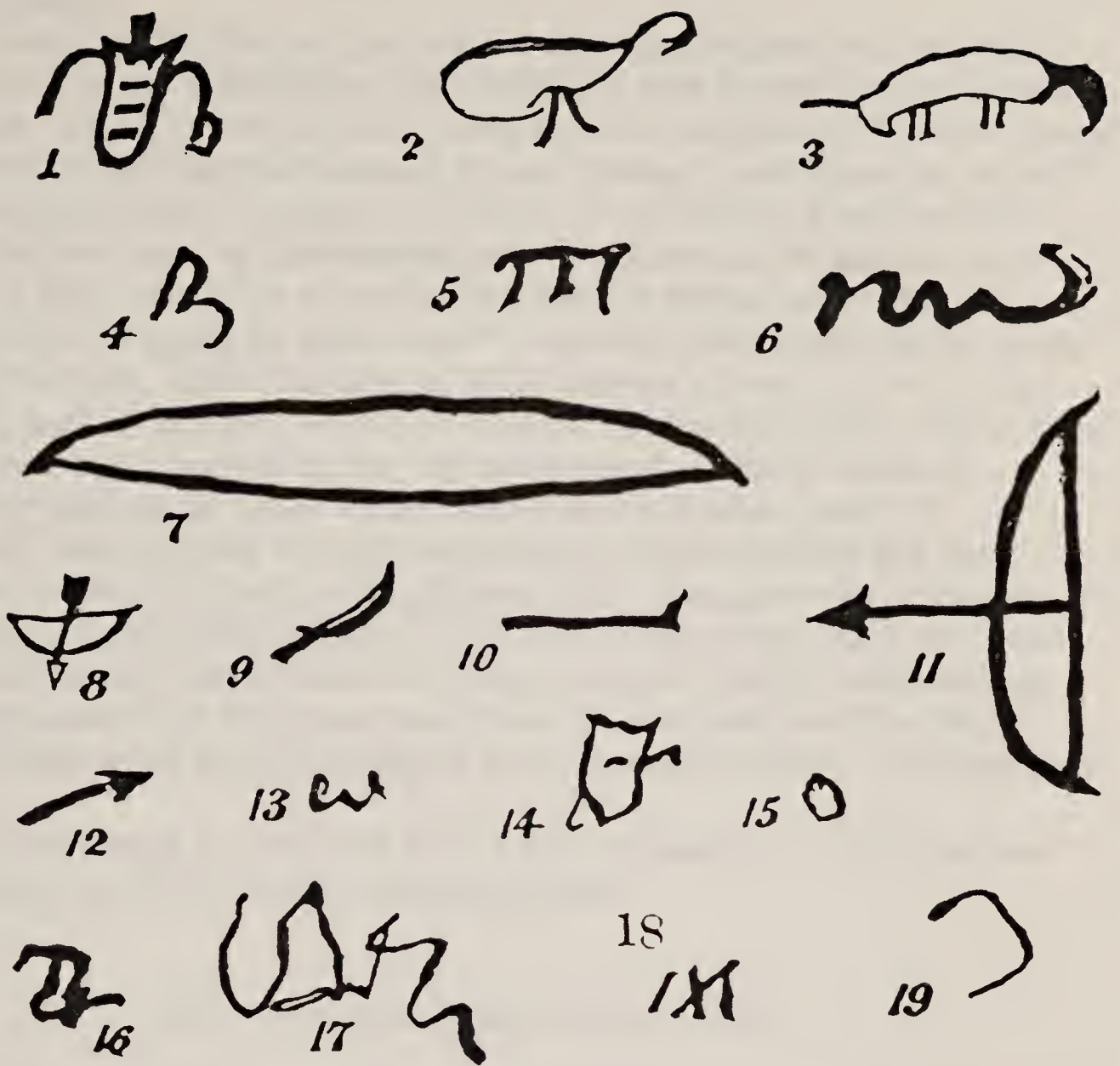
For the Pootatucks:

Chushumack

In the Oxford district, land was obtained by the Town of Derby in a surprisingly short time. There were five principal deeds from the Indians for land in the bounds of what later became Oxford. These purchases were:

1. Wesquantuck (now shortened to Squantuck)
2. Rockhouse Hill
3. Camp's Mortgage
4. The Quaker's Farm purchase
5. The North purchase

These deeds and others are signed chiefly by members of the Paugaset tribe, with a few signatures of Pootatuck Indians. It is here well to note that what we now call the Housatonic River was known variously as the Ousatonic, the Great River, the Stratford River, and



Indian Autographs.

1, UNCAS. 2, OWENECO. 3, ATTAWANHOOD. 4, MAJOR BEN UNCAS. 5, MAMOHET, (son of Oweneco.) 6, MAHACHEMO. 7, MOMAUGUIN. 8, ANSANTAWAE. 9, TONTONIMO, (of Milford.) 10, SHAUMPISHUH. 11, MONTOWESE. 12, ACKENACH. 13, PETHUS. 14, AHAMO. 15, NASSAHEGON. 16, CASSASINAMON. 17, HERMONGARRET. 18, WERAUMAUG. 19, CATOONAH.

Indian Autographs

occasionally as the Pootatuck River. The Naugatuck River was called the Paugasuck.

The town bought land as fast as it could pay, in fact, in one case, that of the "Camp's Mortgage Purchase", it was faster than the town could pay; it had to borrow the money from a merchant, Nicholas Camp of Milford, to pay the Indians and it gave Camp a mortgage as security. It was paid off after a number of years, at the rate of four pounds a year. But the tract of land continued to be known as "Camp's Mortgage". A deed recorded in the Derby Record Book, dated March 5, 1701 appears to apply to this tract.*¹ Another deed recorded by Abel Gunn in his book, dated March 15, 1710 covers a tract of land in the northern part of Oxford, on the so-called Twelve Mile Hill. Gunn says it contained one hundred acres "bounded north on the bounds of Waterbury and on all other sides with our own Indian land".*²

A deed dated August 6, 1687 recorded by Abel Gunn in his book describes a tract of land on Rockhouse Hill. See appendix, "Tract A."

A second deed dated August 15, 1698 (eleven years after the deed mentioned above), gives title to a tract of land "called Wesquantuck and Rockhouse Hill" lying between Four Mile Brook and Five Mile Brook and between the Great River and Woodbury Road. See Appendix, Tract B.

It is interesting to note that one of the witnesses to this deed was John James, the first Derby school teacher.

THE QUAKERS FARM PURCHASE

Oxford is divided roughly, east and west by the ridge that separates the valleys of the Housatonic and the Little Rivers. The northern part of the section west of this ridge is now known as "Quaker Farms", and it extends from Rockhouse Hill to the Southbury Line. But the old records all speak of it as either "Quakers' Farm", "the Quaker's Farm", or the "Quakers Farm purchase". Why it was called "the Quaker's farm" is unknown. If there was a Quaker who owned a farm in this district, there seems to be no record of who he was or where he came from. The name "Quaker's Farm" first appears on record in 1683 when Mr. Joseph Hawley of Stratford proposed "to have his grant in Derby laid at Quaker's Farm". In extent, it was 150 acres it being on record in 1691 that Ebenezer Johnson deeded to John Butler, Yeoman, then resident of Stratford, a tract of land commonly called Quaker's Farm, being one hundred fifty acres". Sharpe says "A well preserved document found at Quaker Farms some years ago gave a description of a layout of 170 acres at Quaker's Farm for

*¹ Appendix, Tract C

*² Appendix, Tract D

Lieut. Johnson, made March 27, 1688 and refers to the "common road" through "the place commonly called the Quaker's Farm". Rockey records "That in 1692, Ebenezer Johnson deeded his land in Quakers' Farm to Dr. John Butler of Stratford who occupied it several years later, and was probably the first permanent white settler. It is said that his house stood about 40 rods south of the old Quakers' Farm burial ground on the west side of the brook (Seven Mile Brook) and under the hill". The location is on the road now known as the Captain Wooster road and there is still the bridge over the brook and a small hillock to mark the site, a short distance beyond the old Wooster house now occupied (1958) by Mrs. Elsie Stanton.

The Quaker's Farm was therefore a relatively small tract and not to be confused with the very large tract known as the "Quakers' Farm Purchase". Sharpe says that the latter "extended easterly to the Naugatuck River and beyond, and therefore included not only a large proportion of the southern part of Oxford, but a considerable part also of what is now Seymour, the Indian Deeds overlapping one another."

The tract, "the Quakers' Farm Purchase" was bought from the Indians and its purchase seems to have been financed by a group of men known as "The Proprietors of the Quakers' Farm Purchase", each proprietor holding varying amounts as his share, depending on the amount of his subscription. This partnership or joint venture may have been formed as early as 1689, as Sharpe says there is a record of "a vote that Capt. Ebenezer Johnson have liberty to take up land in Quakers Farm Purchase, land not previously laid out, he to take up said land according to his list that was when ye land was pitched upon, viz, 1689 & upon ye foregoing termes have ye like priviledge with his neighbors there"

Sharpe, in his "Oxford Sketches" says "The list of names of proprietors in March, 1727-8 is here given as the best available record of the heads of families here at that time. Here followeth a list of names which is ye augmented list which is the rule for dividing the lands in Quakers' Farm Purchase that are yet undivided". Sharpe in his "Seymour and Vicinity" says "A list of proprietors was made out in 1717, but some additions were made as late as 1727. The numbers were drawn by lot and each proprietor made his choice of location in the order indicated by the numbers, but to equalize the matter it was voted that when a second allotment should be made, the choice should be in the reverse order". In the list from "Oxford Sketches", the cash value of each proprietor's holding is given, and in the list from "Seymour Past and Present", the number drawn by lot is given. Hence, to simplify matters, we have consolidated the two lists into one, giving both the cash value and the lot number.

List of Proprietors in 1727-8

Name	Lot Number	£	s	d
Ens Sam Basset	12	28		
George Black	10	21		
Samll Bowers	32	76	12	
Samll Brinsmade	57	22	10	
Abram Canfield	25	23		
John Chatfield	6	113		
John Munson	52	18		
Ens Nikols	35	90		
Joseph Nikols	5	32		
Abraham Person	48	72	7	
Steaphen Peirson Junr	2	76	10	
Steaphen Peirson Snr	56	78		
Mr. Pinto	18	29		
John Pringle	33	32		
John Pringle (jr)	39	85	10	
Ebin Riggs	8	102		
Edward Riggs	1	69		
Lt John Riggs	42	240	18	
John Davis	34	70	4	
Micah Denman	19 + 64	74		
Mr John Durand	59	87	12	
Francis French	22	135		
Abel Gunn	36	157	17	6
Capt. Samll Gunn	28			
Ebin Harger	38	135	10	
Jabiz Harger	47	23		
Joseph Hawkins	16	201	15	
Jonathan Hill	46	21		
Deacon Abel Holbrook	61	129	7	6
John Hull	26	103	3	
Capt Joseph Hull Jnr	40	366	5	
James Humphres	15	25		
Coll:Ebenezer Johnson	54	219	1	9
Ebenezer Johnson	21	72	16	
Jeremiah Johnson	44	159		
John Johnson	60	49	10	
Joseph Johnson	37	42		
Peter Johnson	11	123		
Jonathan Lumm	41	70	4	
Samll Moss	14	43		
William Moss	50	147	15	
Mr. Moss	58			
Ens Sam Riggs	49	88	10	

Name	Lot Number	£	s	d
Andrew Smith	30	132	6	
Ephraim Smith	9	36		
John Smith Jr.	27	20		
John Smith Snr	29	98	10	
Joseph Smith	53	46	10	
Benj. Stiles	23	26	5	
John Tibbals	7	123	2	6
Abraham Tomlinson	13			
Isaac Tomlinson	43	192		
John Tomlinson	31	76	10	
Samll Tomlinson	63	49	5	6
William Tomlinson	51	58	10	
John Towner	17	48		
John Twitchel	24	78		
Samll Washbon	3	74	2	
William Washbon	45	117		
John Weede	55	82	2	
Selvester Wooster	4	39		
Thos Wooster	20	175	10	
Timothy Wooster (Snr)	62	117		
		5285	7	9

The larger holdings and the equivalent in dollars are given.

Holdings of £100 or more.

Capt. Joseph Hull Jr.	£ 366	=	\$1220.
Lt. John Riggs	240		798.
Col. Ebenezer Johnson	210		698.
Joseph Hawkins	201		668.
Isaac Tomlinson	192		638.
Thos Wooster	175		583.
Jeremiah Johnson	159		528.
Capt. Saml Gunn	157		523.
Wm Moss	147		488.
Francis French	135		448.
Ebin Harger	135		448.
Andrew Smith	132		438.
Deacon Abel Holbrook	129		429.
Peter Johnson	123		408.
John Tibbals	123		408.
Wm Washbon	117		389.
Timothy Wooster	117		389.
John Chatfield	110		365.
John Hull	103		342.
Eben Riggs	102		339.

(In New England, six shillings were accounted a dollar; twenty shillings to the pound.)

Whether all the subscribers actually took up land of the value opposite his name is uncertain, and they may have merely participated in the profits of each sale in proportion to the amount of money they subscribed. The Proprietors continued to issue deeds for many years, even as late as 1802, giving a deed January 22nd of that year to James Perry. An interesting feature of the deeds issued by the Proprietors is that many, perhaps all, are not in reality deeds, but are instead 999 year leases. No record has been found as to why this is so.

The wide extent of Quakers Farm Purchase is shown by the two deeds in possession of the writers. The one is a Quit Claim deed, dated April 11, 1792, from Joel Chatfield to the Proprietors of the Quakers' Farm Purchase for a piece of property at or near Bladen's Brook which flows into the Naugatuck River (on the east side thereof) just above the center of Seymour. It is described as "at a place called the northern end of the Bear Hills, bounded, "south by the country road from Woodbury to New Haven a little east of my dwelling house, to the north side of Ditch that brings the water from Bladen's Brook to my mills"

The other deed is for a piece of property on "Hull's Hill" at the extreme northwestern part of Oxford. It is dated April 7th, 1795, and is from "a committee of the Proprietors of the common and undivided Land in sd Derby, Called Quakers' farm purchase to John Basset Junr. for two pieces of land. The first is described as bounded:

West on land of Nathan Buckingham
Southerly on land of sd John Bassett, Junr
Eastwardly on land of Stephen Curtis, and highway,
And northerly on highway."

The second piece of land is described as "lying at the south end of Phinecock (or Shinecock), so called, being bounded:

Southerly on the Highway by the River
Eastwardly on land of John Basset
Northerly on land of Eliakin Beardslee
And Westwardly on land of John Twitchel

Signed, John Riggs, junr
Daniel Perkins"

The wide extent of the Quakers' Farm Purchase is recognized by Sharpe in his "Seymour Past and Present" where he says: (in Seymour) "the hill bounded northerly by Bladen's Brook, southerly by Pearl Street and westerly by Main Street was known two centuries ago as Indian Hill, and the next hill south reaching from Pearl Street nearly a mile Southward was known as Success Hill. Strange as it

may seem, these hills were included in the Quaker Farms Purchase which extended from the Milford boundary line on the east and Westward to the Housatonic River."

KETTLETOWN AND THE WOODBURY "FIFTH" INDIAN PURCHASE

Cothren's "History of Ancient Woodbury" contains a map of the various purchases of land made by Woodbury from the Indians, and shows a tract which he numbers "5" and speaks of it as the "Fifth Purchase". It contained a triangular portion of Oxford the boundaries of which are on the east, Eight Mile Brook, on the west, the Housatonic River, and on the north, the straight line running from the Housatonic River to Eight Mile Brook in a generally northeast direction, and coinciding with a portion of Maple Tree Hill Road. Cothren speaks of this tract No. 5 as having been purchased from the Indians for the consideration of a brass kettle, and it received from this circumstance, the name of Kettletown. He says that it was purchased "at a very early period", but goes on to say, "On the 16th of April, 1679, this tract was again sold by the Indians together with Quakers Farms, in Derby, east of the Eight Mile Brook, to Ebenezer Johnson of Derby and his associates." As Woodbury was only settled in 1673, it would seem that the town had claim to this piece of land for six years only, inasmuch as Ebenezer Johnson and his associates were all Derbymen. Apparently this was a case of the overlapping of Indian deeds, which was not unusual.

The order of the General Assembly of May 7, 1741, creating the parish of Oxford, gives the northwestern boundary as following Eight Mile Brook southward "until it comes to the dividing line between the twon of Woodbury and Derby, thence westerly along that line unto the great river." This is the same as the line splitting Woodbury's No. 5 purchase, and indicates that for some time prior to 1741, it was the acknowledged boundary between Woodbury and Derby.

CHAPTER 4

THE NEW PARISH OF OXFORD

Thus the Oxford district got settled as a collection of farms, all looking for governmental and ecclesiastical organization to the Town of Derby. They trudged down to the Derby Meeting House, about nine miles away each Sunday, and bore their dead there for burial. For some sixty years they put up with these conditions but finally brought about the forming of a new parish, Oxford. The going to meeting so far away, each Sabbath Day, and staying there for two services, one in the morning, and the other in the afternoon was so difficult that it is small wonder that a demand arose among the people living in the Oxford district to be "set off" as a separate parish, and in 1740 such a petition was presented to the General Assembly. It should be noted that the petition had been presented by three groups of people:

- 1) those dwelling in the "northwest part of Derby" (seemingly Oxford Center, from the names)
- 2) those from "the southwest part of Waterbury Woods" in the old society of Waterbury.
- 3) those from Southbury

Strangely enough there was no representation from Five Mile Hill or Quaker's Farm, although the bounds for the new parish laid down in the petition included most of those districts.

The first petition for the setting apart of Oxford as a separate parish was made to the General Assembly in May, 1740, and on the 7th of May 1741, the petition was granted in the following words:

"Whereas upon the memorial of Timothy Worster, John Twichel and John Towner Esq, dwelling in the northwest part of the township of Derby, Isaac Trowbridge, John Weed, Jonas Weed, Thomas and Joseph Osborn dwelling in the southwest part of Waterbury woods, in the old society in said Waterbury and Isaac Knowles, Joseph Towner, Eliphalet Bristol, John Tift and Aaron Bristol, dwelling in the southeast part of the township of Woodberry woods in the parish of Southbury, moving to the General Assembly holden at Hartford, May, anno Dom. 1740, that they might become one entire, ecclesiastical society, and praying for a committee &c; the said General Assembly did appoint a committee, who accordingly making their report to the General Assembly at New Haven in October last, and the same not being accepted; and the said

General Assembly in October last appointing another committee, Colo. Benjamin Hall, Capt. Isaac Dickerman and Capt. John Fowler to view and report &c.: And whereas the said last mentioned committee have to this Assembly made their report that according to the direction of said Assembly they have repaired to the abovesaid places, &c. and find and are of opinion, that it is necessary and best that the said inhabitants be made a distinct separate ecclesiastical society, and that their bounds and limits be as followeth:

Beginning at the mouth of the four mile brook in Derby bounds, where the brook emptieth itself into the great river, and to run as said brook runneth, by said brook unto the bridge that is between the dwelling houses of Abel Gunn and John Holbrook; and from said bridge by the highway that runneth between the land commonly called the Camp's Mortgage and the land called Quakers Farm Purchase, unto the river called the Little river; and thence as the Little river runneth to Naugatuck River; and thence northerly, by said Naugatuck River, that being the east bounds of said society, until it comes to the dividing line between the towns of Derby and Waterbury; Thence turning westerly and running as the line runneth between the towns of Derby and Waterbury, as aforesaid, until it comes to the southeasterly boundary of Thomas and Joseph Osborn's farm in the bounds of Derby, and from thence to run northerly by the northeast corner boundary of Jos. Weed's farm in Waterbury town bounds; and from thence a northwesterly line to the northeast corner of Isaac Trowbridge's farm, in said Waterbury town bounds: and from thence to run westerly, in the line of said Trowbridge's farm about sixty rods, to Woodbury town line; and thence to the northwest corner of Isaac Knowles' farm in the township of Woodbery; and from the northwest corner of said Knowles' farm, a west line to the eight mile brook, in the bounds of Woodbery; and then by said brook, until it comes to the dividing line between the towns of Woodbery and Derby; and thence to run westerly in the line that divideth between the said towns of Woodbury and Derby, unto the great river; thence by the river southerly to the first mentioned boundary, the mouth of four mile brook; as by said report on file dated May the 7th anno Dom. 1741.

"It is thereupon resolved by this Assembly, That the above said memorialists, inhabitants of Derby, Waterberry and Woodberry, situate and living within the bounds and limits above described, be and become together one entire, separate, and distinct ecclesiastical society or parish, subsisting and known by the name of the parish of Oxford, and endowed with all powers and privileges wherewith other parishes within this government are by law endowed."

The question may be raised as to why the new parish was named Oxford. The "Register and Manual of the State of Connecticut" prepared annually by the Secretary of State says that it was named after Oxford, England. No authority is given for the statement, and as apparently none of the settlers came from that city, it does not seem likely the parish was so named. A possible reason for the choice is that John Twichel suggested the name because he had come to Oxford from Oxford, Massachusetts when a lad of seventeen. His father had been instrumental in the purchase of lands for the Massachusetts town. By 1740, when the petition was signed, John Twichel was 66 years old and of great influence in the new community. It may even be that Oxford Center had already been known locally as the place "where the Oxford people live". All of this is mere conjecture, and as Oxford, Massachusetts was probably named after the English town, it follows that Oxford, Connecticut, either directly or indirectly got its name from Oxford, England.

1740
- 66
1674
+ 17
1681

The record of the first parish meeting is as follows:

"At a meeting of the parish or society of Oxford, in the colony of Connecticut on the thirtieth day of June 1741, being lawfully warned & held at the house of Samuel Twitchels. Isaac Trowbridge of said Parrish by a major vote was chosen clerk of the same, and the oath by law provided for a society Clerk was to him administered in said meeting pr Samll Bassit, Esquir, Justice of Peace.

At said meeting mr Isaac Knowles by a major vote was chosen medderator for said meeting.

Voted and past in said meeting that mr Caleb Perry, mr Ebenezer Riggs, mr John Lumm to be a committee for said society to take care of the prudentials of sd society.

Voted and Past in said meeting to hier a minister for this Present year.

Voted and Past in said meeting that mr John Towner, mr Abial Fairchild and mr Samll Twichel to be a minister committee for this Present year and to hier a minister upon probation.

Voted and Past in said meeting that their shall be a rate made of five pence upon the pound upon the list in the year 1740 in order to Defray the Charges of hiering mr Birdsey, this vote the inhabitants on Rock house hill are exempted from paying and charges thereof.

Voted and past in said meeting that mr Ephraim Washband shall be a Collector and Treasurer and to collect and gather sd five peney rate by the first day of September next ensuing.

Voted and Past in said meeting that mr John Towner and mr Samll Woster shall be in with the first committee in order to take care of the prudentials of said society.

test per me
Isaac Trowbridge
Society Clerk."

Subsequent meetings continued to be held in the house of Samuel Twitchel and at the home of John Twitchel, probably the house still standing on the north side of Academy Road, just west of Jack's Brook. At a meeting held October 6th 1741 the Society voted to build a meeting house, as follows:

"It was voted by a two thirds part of the inhabitants by law qualified to vote and present in meeting, to build a meeting house, and to meet the assembly in their next session at New Haven to pray for a commission to appoint, order, and fix the place whereon their meeting house shall be erected and built."

The above wording is quoted in Judge Wilcoxson's "1876 Centennial Address", and the Judge adds "Who that committee was or were, when, where and why they decided on setting their stake for a site for the house to be built does not appear on Society or Parish Records"

But this latter statement by the Judge appears to be incorrect, for Sharpe, in his "Oxford History, Part 1" says "Mr. Ebenezer Riggs was appointed agent for the Society to present the matter to the General Assembly and the latter appointed Capt. Isaac Dickerman, Mr. James Talmadge and Mr. John Hitchcock as the committee to affix the place; the following being the order of the Assembly: "the said committee having viewed their circumstances (i.e. of the inhabitants of Oxford), and have set down a stake and laid stones to the same at the south end of the hill, commonly called Jack's Hill, and near the highway that runs on the east side of the Little River, on land belonging to Ephraim Washbourn, which said place the said committee report to be a most convenient place for the said inhabitants to build a meeting house upon; Resolved by this Assembly, that the above said place be the place for the said inhabitants to build house upon; and the said inhabitants are hereby ordered to build a meeting house at the said place accordingly." ("Jack's Hill" and "Jack's Brook", the latter a tributary of Little River, are supposed to have been named after an Indian who bore the English name of Jack). Two things are noticeable in the action of the Assembly, the first being the closeness of church and state, it not only being necessary to get permission of the Assembly to build, but also to have a committee of the Assembly actually choose the site. The second is that the site of this first meeting house, built in 1743 was quite near the present Congregational Church. The site was on land owned by Ephraim Washbourn, and the deed covering the transfer of the land was dated October 20, 1741. A couple of years followed before the building was completed and the record of the first meeting held in it is dated June 21, 1743. This building is of course not the present Congregational Church building, which was not erected until 1795.

"At the parish meeting held June 21, 1745, it was voted to give Mr. Jonathan Lyman a call to preach on probation. A committee,

consisting of Capt. Timothy Russell, Capt. John Lum, and Ensign John Chatfield were appointed to hire Mr. Jonathan Lyman upon probation for the space of four sabbaths. At the end of this period, at a meeting on the first Monday of July, 1745, it was voted to give Mr. Lyman a call to settle over the parish. A settlement of £500, old tenor, was voted to be paid in four years (£125 yearly) and a salary of £125 yearly till the settlement was paid; the salary then to advance to £150 yearly. Subsequently, it was voted to add £10 yearly to the salary for five years."

He was installed as minister of the parish of Oxford the fourth Wednesday of October, 1745. He continued as such for 18 years until 1763 when he fell from his horse and was killed.

In the foregoing, the expression "old tenor" is used. The word "tenor" meant the value of the bill as marked on its face. Bills issued before the year 1739 were known as "old tenor", and those of a date later than 1739 were called "new tenor". At that time England and Spain were at war in the West Indies, and to raise money to aid in the conduct of the war, the Connecticut Assembly issued £45,000 in paper currency in 1739, making it the dividing line between the old and new issues. The new bills depreciated rapidly and it was probably for that reason that Mr. Lyman's settlement was to be paid in bills of the "old tenor".

By 1787, the following men lived in the Oxford part of what was then Southbury: Eliphalet Bristol, Riggs Bristol, Truman Bristol, Gad Bristol, Isaac Briscoe, Thomas Bissell, David Candee, Samuel Candee, Timothy Candee, Jehiel Peet, Joseph Towner, Samuel Wheeler, J. Wilmot, and Isaac Munson.

CHAPTER 5

SOME EARLY SOCIAL AND BUSINESS PROBLEMS

In a history of this limited scope, no attempt can be made to cover all the social customs and problems of early days, so mention is made of only a few which seem to apply to Oxford and are of peculiar interest.

No celebration whatever was made of Christmas Day or of any saint's day. Marriage was a civil contract only, with no church services, and most burials were without any religious service.

SOCIAL TITLES

It was a period when social ranks were still strongly marked regardless of how democratic the government might be, and titles of respect were in common use. Thus, a very highly respected citizen might be addressed as "The most worshipful Capt. Johnson. "Esquire" or "Squire" was applied to large land owners, usually also to justices of the peace. Mr. (Master) was a title of respect given only to persons of mature age and high standing in the community. The ordinary citizen was plain "John Doe", or sometimes "Goodman Doe".

Military titles were also in common use; General, Colonel, Major, Captain, Lieutenant, and Ensign all appear. Skippers of merchant vessels engaged in ocean borne commerce were also given the title "Captain", so that it is often difficult to tell whether the title of Captain is military or nautical.

It is also said that unmarried women were addressed as Mistress and not Miss., the latter title being applied to young ladies of doubtful reputation.

MEALS

"The breakfast of the farmers often consisted mainly of a soup made of salt meat and beans, and seasoned with savory herbs. This dish was called bean porridge. Tea and coffee they had none during the seventeenth century. Their drink was chiefly beer and cider, after their orchards were sufficiently grown to afford them such a luxury.

The dinner was a much more substantial meal. A large Indian

pudding, with an appropriate sauce often constituted the first course; and after that, boiled beef and pork, and then wild game with potatoes; and then succeeded turnips and other vegetables native to the climate; and in the fall, samp and pumpkins were cooked by them into various dishes. Dinner was served at noon.

At supper, afterwards called tea, they also ate very substantial food. It was almost always cold, with an occasional variation of cake made of corn meal, rye, or buckwheat. These cakes, however, were oftener prepared for breakfast."

A favorite drink was made from a mug of cider heated by plunging into it a red hot poker. This was known as "flip".

The position of women whose husbands were missing was difficult. Women were scarce in the early settlements, and widows were expected to re-marry. After the war with the Pequot Indians, there were some Connecticut soldiers who did not return to their homes, and their wives did not know where they were or whether they were alive or dead. These women were left in an uncertain position, not knowing whether they were wives or widows, and they could not remarry without first proving that their husbands were dead. To remedy this situation, the court passed the following order, October 11, 1697:

"It is ordered by this court that no bill of divorce shall be granted to any man or woman lawfully married but in case of adultery, fraudulent contract, wilful desertion for Three years with total neglect of duty or seven years providentiall absence being not heard of after due enquiary mead and certified, such party shall be counted as legally ded to ye other party in all which cases a bill of divorce may be granted by ye Court of assistants to ye agreved party () may then lawfully mary or be married to any other () by woful Experience in ye late war many of ye inhabitants".

*The () indicates a hole in the old document. So after seven years, a widow could remarry, and Gunn's record of the court action would seem to indicate that there were such cases in Derby.

Going to meeting on Sunday was the great social event of the week, and, curiously enough, each man aspired to be allotted a seat of dignity in the meeting house, the front seats being considered those of greatest dignity. The men sat by themselves on one side of the meeting house, the women on the other.

Once each year, at a town meeting, the town of Derby "seated the meeting house", allotting to each member his seat, according to his rating on the town tax list and in these selections, the Oxford people must have participated. It must have been a ticklish business, this seating, and seems to have been the cause of some heart burnings. The earliest record of "seating" is in 1707.

They started at it in October, when it is recorded that at a meeting

of the Derby Congregational Society they voted "that the town will seat the meeting house", and have seated Major Johnson, Ensign Riggs, Mr. William Tomlinson, and Isaac Nichols in the first seat before the pulpit, Lieut. Thomas Wooster, Ensign Joseph Hull, John Tibbals and Stephen Pierson senior, in the first short seat joining to the pulpit, and further they have not proceeded yet"

But, apparently, it did not suit Major Johnson to be seated with the three other men. One might infer from this, that by this time the Major had become rather overbearing, but, as we have already pointed out, it was an age of social distinctions, and there seems to have been no objection to granting him this rather unusual honor. And so, Abel Gunn records as follows:

"December 9, 1707. Voted yt Major Johnson shall according to his desire set at the end of the pulpit in a short seat alone and yt the town be at suitable charge to make it handsome and convenient to entertain the sd Major honorably; at the same time voted yt Mrs. Bowers, Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Moss shall sit in sd seat on the women's side next the pulpit which is made with bannisters like a pew. Voted that those seats before the pulpit be parted. At the same time voted yt Ens. Saml Riggs Mr William Tomlinson shall sit in the first seat facing to the pulpit, and their wives likewise. Item yt Mr Isaac Nicols and Lef: Thomas Worster in the 2nd of these seats facing to the pulpit, and their wives in the same rank. Item Doctor John Durand and Mr. John Davis in the 3rd of these seats and their wives in the same order. At the same time "voted yt Stephen Pierson, John Tibbals, Lef. Joseph Hull, Joseph Hawkins shall sit in the first short seat facing to the end of the pulpit behind where the Major sits; at the same time voted yt the town will have the rest of the meeting house seated according to rates and yt John Tibbals Ens: Joseph Hull and Joseph Hawkins be a committee to see yt matter of seating according to rates p pound. At the same time voted yt heads shall be taken out of the list all except one head to each Estate, in order to seat the meeting house according to rates."

But it apparently took another meeting to get the entire matter settled to everyone's satisfaction, for Gunn records:

"At meeting 26th of December 1707 the town voted yt the first long seat shall be accounted the highest in dignity, yet unseated, and yt the first short seat yet unseated shall be accounted the 2d seat in dignity yt is yet to seat and then the 2d long seat the third in dignity, at the last short seat fourth in dignity and then the other seats Being all in one tear to receive their dignity from their order, successively."

The "History of the Old Town of Derby" gives a slightly different

version of this event, the date of the meeting being given as December 15th instead of December 7th. It records that they voted also "to seat the Widow Washborn, widow Johnson, widow Tomlinson and widow French and wife of Abel Holbrook in the next seat behind the pew" (i.e., the seat on the women's side which is made with bannisters like a pew.) Both accounts agree that the men sat on one side of the meeting house, and the women by themselves, on the other side.

The militia in Colonial days were generally known as "Train Bands", and the days on which they were called to be present on the Green for military training were known as Training Days, or Muster. Their arms and accoutrements were examined and if they proved to be in proper condition, the men were said to have "passed muster", a phrase still in use for civil as well as military matters. These days were occasions for the general gathering of the inhabitants. Drums and fifes and the waving of flags added to the excitement. By the end of the day, the trainees gave themselves up to games such as wrestling, races, cricket, quoits, and shooting at a mark, and it is pretty well conceded that many of them returned home at night rather thoroughly intoxicated.

In Oxford, there appears to have been two military districts (possibly east and west) for when in 1826, St Peter's Episcopal Church agreed to the setting off of Quakers' Farm as a distinct ecclesiastical society, it was voted that the new society was to be "bounded by the military line of Oxford." No record has been found of what this line was.

Rockey's "History of New Haven County" says that the following were the captains of the 1st Company in Oxford: John Lum, Abel Gunn, Joseph Davis 1754, Zacheriah Hawkins, Joseph Osborn, John Woster, Thomas Clark, Ebenezer Riggs, David Pierson, Samuel Candee, Jehiel Hine, Job Candee, Asahel Hyde, Col. John Davis, Andrew Buckingham, Lemuel Beardsley, Philo Beecher, Gideon Riggs, Hiram Candee, Letson Osborn 1821, William Osborn, Sherman Buckingham, Lewis Davis, John Beecher, Ebenezer Riggs, William Hinman, Moody M. Brown 1835.

For many years, the bodies of those who had died in the Oxford district were carried down to Derby for burial. For this purpose it was customary to use a horse litter. "Two horses with saddles were placed with their heads in the same direction, one forward of the other about seven or eight feet, and a long stout linen bag turned or looped up at each end was put over each saddle to receive the ends of two long smooth and strong poles, one on each side of the horses, and two or three cross pieces were put on the poles between the horses. On this litter the coffin was placed lengthwise and fastened to the crosspieces by cords. As the horses moved on, the bearers walked on each side and steadied the coffin. The coffin was often made of whitewood boards and colored with lampblack, but the most costly were made of cherry wood.

For general travel, they had no wheeled carriages or wagons until the middle of the eighteenth century and very few until the Revolutionary War was closed. The bridegroom who went to a neighboring town to be united with a partner whom he hoped to find through life a "help-meet for him", whether he was a gentleman or yeoman, rode on horse-back and carried her home on a pillion behind him".

GOVERNMENTAL REGULATION OF BUSINESS

Regulation of business often seems to be a modern innovation, but as early as 1677, it became necessary to set a limit to prices to be charged for tanning leather and for the manufacture of shoes.

In the early days of Derby and Oxford, harness, shoes, and much clothing was made of leather. As the hides had to be tanned to make them usable, the tanner was an important man, and in a position to raise prices as he desired unless restrained by law. It seems hard to believe that so early in this simple society, any industry should have required governmental supervision, but unscrupulous men were then found, even as now. So on October 11, 1677, the General Assembly passed the following order:

"For the regulation of ye tanners, it is ordered by this Court yt no tanner shall have any more for tanning any hide than Two pence upon ye pound for green hids and fouer pence upon ye pound for dry hids."

Likewise with the shoemakers:

"For ye regulation of ye shoemakers it is ordered yt after ye first of May next no shoemaker shall take above five pence hapenny a size for all plain and woden hele shoes for al sizes above ye mens Sevens, 3 sole shoes well made and wrought above 7 a size for well wrought French soles".

It does not appear what "French" soles were, but it is known that shoes were not made "right and left".

CHAPTER 6

MEN OF THE EARLY TIMES WHOM OXFORD REMEMBERS

There is a tradition that the first white child born in Oxford was John Griffin, in 1725. Judge Wilcoxson gives this item in his 1876 Centennial Address, and Sharpe repeats it in his "Oxford Sketches, Part Two". Neither one gives any authority for the statement, and how the tradition arose is not clear. Before 1741, when Oxford was made a separate parish, all births were recorded as having taken place in Derby. As we have already noted, John Chatfield, John Tibbals, Samuel Riggs, John Hall, John Pringle and Samuel Nichols had all settled in Oxford by 1710, and it would have been quite extraordinary if one of these families had not had a child born before 1725.

The tradition has been perpetuated by the establishment of a rest area on Route 67 bearing Griffin's name. We do know that John Griffin served with Gen. Wolfe at Quebec in the 12th Company of the 3rd Regiment and in the Revolution, he was in Col. Storr's Regiment at New York in the autumn of 1776. He is said to have lived in Quaker Farms "opposite the old cemetery". It may be that the stone house on Park Road known as the "Griffin House" did not attain that name until about 1839, when William Griffin married the daughter of Silas Sperry who built it.

EBENEZER JOHNSON

Of the early settlers in Derby the most prominent man seems to have been Ebenezer Johnson. He is thought to have been born in Fairfield, Connecticut about 1649. He came to Derby about 1668, when he was a young man of nineteen. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Wooster, in 1671. Abel Gunn records April 18, 1677 that "the town have granted to Ebenezer Johnson a home lott----and if the Said eben Johnson build not a sofitient hous according to law eith in a yere or be in a very; Likely way So to doe; the lott shall return to the town again." This happened when he was twenty-eight years old. It will be noticed that he was addressed as plain Ebenezer Johnson, without any title whatsoever. He must have taken up his home lot shortly after this peremptory notice to him, for he soon became a leading spirit in all the interests and enterprises of the town. He is said to have developed marvellous activity and energy, and a generosity of character that won the confidence of the whole community.

He became a very successful farmer, and soon gained a military officer's rank, which brought him some little money, thereby obtaining considerable advantage over most of his neighbors, who did their business almost entirely by barter. In 1685, he was chosen Lieutenant of the First Company organized in Derby, and in 1689, (aged 43) he was commissioned Captain by the General Court in a Volunteer Company raised to aid England to oppose the French in the twenty-four years of war that followed. For his public services, the town (Derby) gave him while Captain, one hundred and seventy-five acres of land at "Quaker's Farm" including the Eight-mile brook from North to South.

However, it does not appear that he ever lived in Quaker's Farm, but he gave his son, Peter Johnson 150 acres of land "in the southern part of "Quakers' Farm Purchase" where he, Peter Johnson, lived and died.

By 1703, Ebenezer Johnson, then aged 54, appears to have attained a commanding position in the town, being addressed as "Ye Worshipful", signifying the highest dignity. Abel Gunn records "February 1, 1703:

"Voted that ye Worshipfull Captaine Ebenezer Jno son in Quaker's farm purchase in land not pitch'd upon or lay'd out already if he can find any such hath liberty granted him to take up according to his list that was then when ye land was pitch'd upon viz 1689" (pitched meant selected).

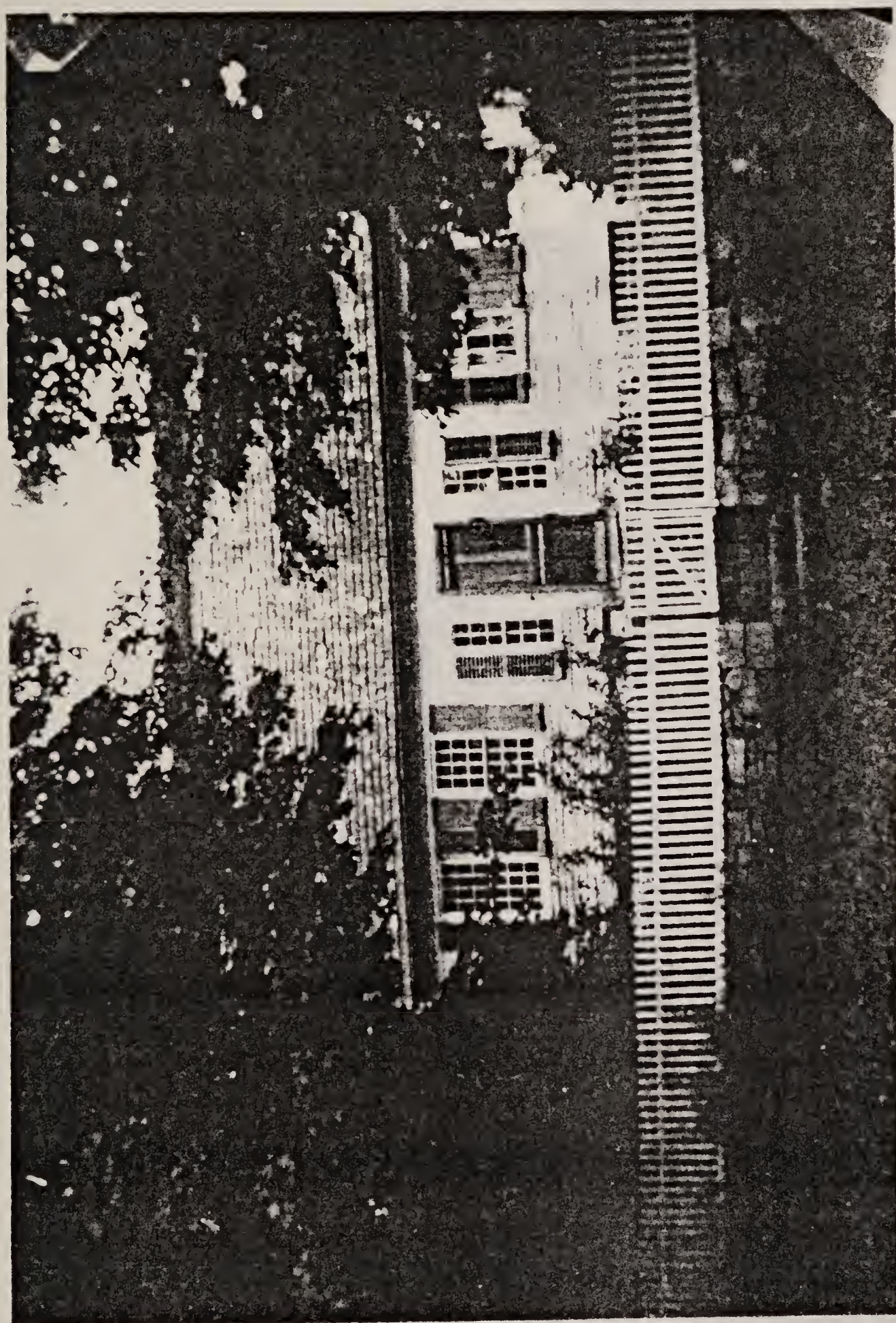
In 1704 he was appointed Sergeant-major of New Haven County militia. By 1706, he is said to have transacted about all the public business of the town. In 1710, an expedition was organized to go to Port Royal and Major Johnson was commissioned Colonel, being then 61 years old. He was Representative to the General Court much of the time from 1685 to 1723. His name is included in the list of proprietors of the Quakers' Farm Purchase in March, 1727-8 he being the third largest holder.

He was undoubtedly a remarkable man, to whom his fellow-townsmen turned for leadership, and whom they were glad to honor, as is instanced by the action of the Town Meeting in 1707, which voted that in the meeting house he should sit alone, in the seat of greatest dignity. This was about the highest honor they could give him.

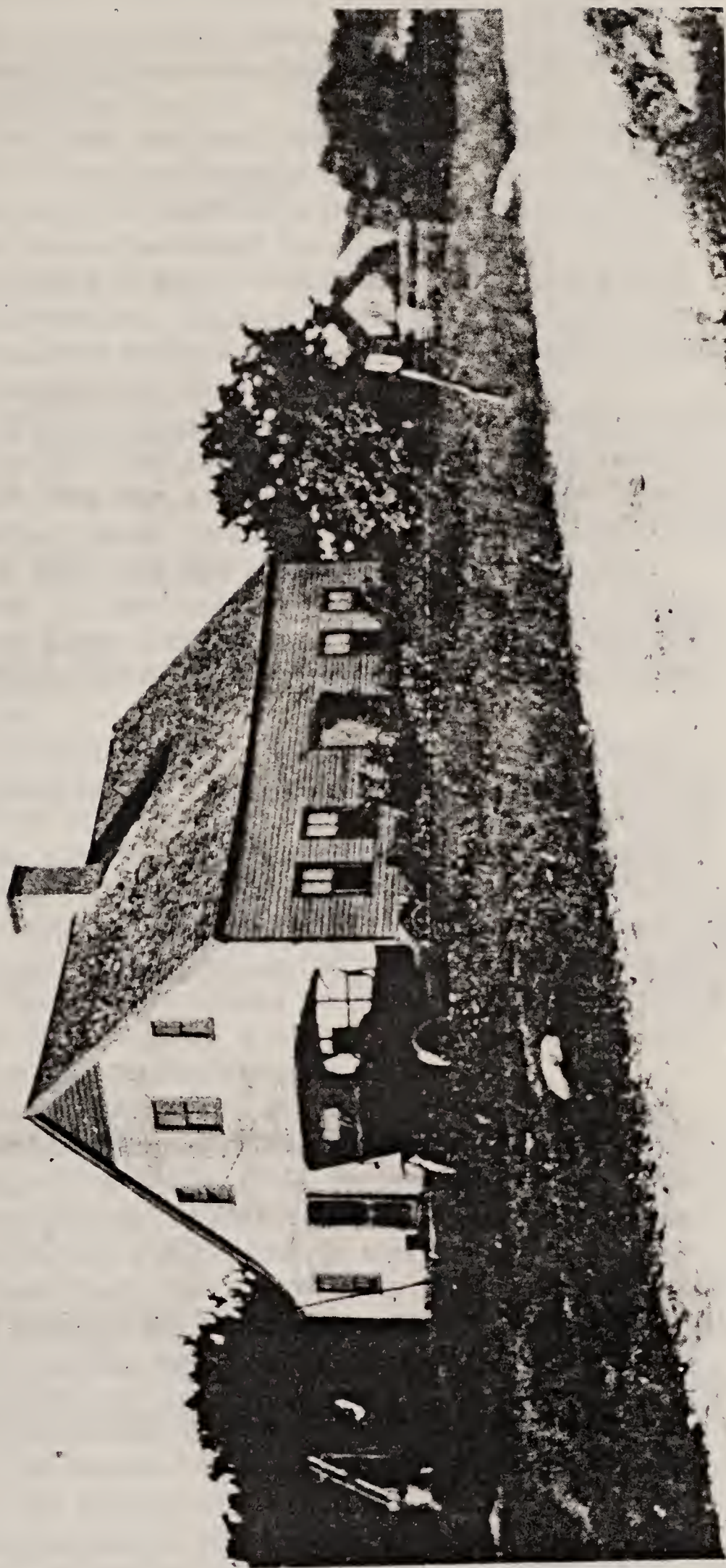
His influence must have been felt in the Oxford District, for he was chosen in 1700, in company with Henry Wooster, to run the bounds between Derby, Woodbury, and Waterbury.

JOHN TWITCHELL 1st.

John Twitchell 1st was an interesting early settler, of whom Abel Gunn records: "December 9, 1700, The laying out of John Twitchel



Old John Twitchell House on Academy Rd.



One of the old Riggs Houses on Riggs St. Now the residence of Mr. S. Rzeszutek.

pastur in the rocks above David Meadow, so called." It should be noted that during the course of the years, there were three John Twitchells, so to identify them, it is necessary to note their ages at the time of specific events.

The first John Twitchell was born about 1674, in Medfield, Mass. which place is about 15 miles southwest of Boston. He moved to Derby at some time prior to ~~1689~~¹⁶⁹⁸, as in that year, he married Sarah Pierson daughter of Steven and Mary Tomlinson Pierson. Mary Tomlinson was a daughter of Henry Tomlinson, who with his wife Alice, came from Derbyshire, England to Milford, Connecticut in 1652. They removed from Milford to Stratford and in 1689, Tomlinson purchased land in Derby from the Indians.

John Twitchel 1st's grandmother was Mary Riggs Twitchel, whose Riggs relatives, it is said, had been living in Derby "for a number of years" prior to 1689. She was a daughter of Edward Riggs who came from England to Boston, Mass. in 1633. His son, Sergt Edward Riggs settled in Milford in 1640, and was one of the men who settled Paugaset, now Derby. So the Riggs family had been in Derby from the very start. Mary Riggs Twitchel was ~~69~~⁷⁸ years old in ~~1689~~¹⁶⁹⁸ when John Twitchel married, and she may have suggested to him that he come to Derby to live.

In 1702, John Twitchell's name appears in the list of persons "drawing for lots westward of Little River and Bladens Brook". He is said to have built in 1714 the house later known as the Washband Tavern. He had been a soldier in the expedition against Canada in 1690, and it was probably upon his return that he took up his final residence in Derby. The "Washband Tavern" is the large house, still standing (1958) on the east side of the Oxford Road, in the southern part of Oxford. It was for many years the home of Mr. Albert Pope, and is so designated in the Oxford, Connecticut Tercentary Booklet. It is now occupied by Mr. Stanley Seccombe.

At the time of the building of this house in 1714, John Twitchel was 40 years old, and he seems to have continued to live there for some years. But sometime before 1741, he moved to Oxford Center, as the records of the Oxford Congregational Church state that on October 6, 1741, a meeting was held at the house of John Twitchel, and the evidence seems to be that this was the house on Academy Rd., still standing, until recently the residence of Mr. E. F. von Wettberg. Town records show that this house was in the possession of John Twitchel as late as 1751, and he was known to be still living in 1756.

He was one of the men who, in 1740, signed the petition to the General Assembly that Oxford be made a separate parish. His name also appears among the signers of the petition of the "North Farmers" when the Oxford Congregational Ecclesiastical Society was being formed in 1741. He must therefore have been of the Congregational faith.

see pg. 2

1714
-40
1674

1756
1674
82

SAMUEL TWITCHELL

This was the eldest son of John Twitchell 1st, who was born in Derby in 1711. He married Hannah Hinman at Southbury in 1739. The Oxford Congregational Church records state, 1741, "It was voted that the meetings on the Sabbath be held at the house of Samuel Twitchell till ye year be ended" It is not clear where this house was. The Twitchell family geneaology says that he and his wife lived in Woodbury. He had been admitted, 1736, "to full communion" in the first church of Derby, so apparently he came to Oxford or Woodbury sometime between 1736 and 1741. Until 1731, Southbury was a part of Woodbury, so it may have been that his house was in the southern section of Southbury and so near enough to admit of its use for the Oxford services.

✓ JOHN TWITCHELL 2nd

This was the second son of John 1st, born in 1713. About 1733, he married Ann Harger, daughter of Jabez and Ann Gilbert Harger. On June 21, 1770, "John Twitchell" signed a deed giving a piece of property to St. Peter's Church, "In consideration of the love and Goodwill that I have and do bare(sic) towards the church of England in the parish of Oxford." At that date, John 1st, if living, would have been 96 years old, and it seems unlikely that he would have changed his faith from Congregational to Episcopal between 1751 (aged 77) and 1770 (aged 96). It is probable, therefore that it was John 2nd who signed this deed, and that he was an Episcopalian.

THE WOOSTER FAMILY

The Woosters, many of whom settled early in Oxford, were an interesting family. The Connecticut branch were descendants of Edward Wooster who appeared in Milford as early as 1651, and settled in Paugaset now Derby. He married first, Elizabeth French by whom he had eight children, among whom were Elizabeth Wooster who married Col. Ebenezer Johnson and Abraham. Edward Wooster married second, Tabitha Tomlinson by whom he had six children, among whom was Timothy Wooster. Abraham married Mary Walker in 1697, and in 1706 they removed to Stratford township in the southeast corner of what is now Huntington. In 1722, he purchased lands on Goodhill Road in Quakers' Farm, where he erected a "mansion house" and a sawmill. In 1733, he sold both his house and the sawmill, described as being located "near Munson's Corners", to Samuel Wooster Jr.

Abraham is said to have been a stone mason and was living as late as 1743. His most distinguished son was Gen. David Wooster, whose services to his country are well known, but it is somewhat forgotten that he lived as a boy and young man in Oxford. He was born in Stratford, and was ten or twelve years old when his father moved to Quakers' Farm, where he apparently remained until he was ready to enter Yale College. In 1746, he married the daughter of Thomas Clapp, then President of Yale. He had a distinguished military career, both before and during the Revolution, during which latter he was shot in the action near Danbury, May 2, 1777, and died shortly afterward.

CAPTAIN JOHN WOOSTER

John Wooster, born December 22, 1719, was the son of Thomas and Sarah Hawkins Wooster, and grandson of Thomas and Phoebe Tomlinson Wooster, and great grandson of Edward and Elizabeth French Wooster. In the list of members of St. Peter's Church, Oxford in 1795, he is listed as John Wooster Esq. The title Esq. implies that he was a large landowner, and probably a Justice of the Peace. On June 18, 1746, he married Eunice Hull, daughter of Samuel and Anna Riggs Hull.

In the list of proprietors of the Quakers' Farm Purchase, as of 1727, the name of Captain Joseph Hull appears, as owning £366 5 shillings, and also that of Lt. John Riggs, as owning £240 18 shillings. They were the two largest share holders. So it may have been that John Wooster's wife, Eunice Hull, inherited considerable land from the Hulls and the Riggs, which might account for John Wooster's owning more land than the others of the Wooster family. This, of course, is only conjecture.

He was generally known as "Captain John". The Connecticut Colonial Records show that in 1767 "This Assembly do establish Mr. John Wooster to be Captain of the 13th Company in the 2nd Regiment in this colony." He was at that time 48 years old. Sharpe's "Seymour Past and Present" says of him: "Captain John Wooster probably came here near 1750, and was then keeping a large tavern on Little River, about two miles from the Falls (at Oxford and Park Roads). There had been a mill property sold there in 1747, which, from the description and the distance, is the locality near the dwelling (in 1900) of David C. Riggs" During the Revolution (long before the Oxford turnpike was laid out), it was a tavern of considerable note, and was known as the Captain John Wooster Tavern. It was torn down in 1872-73. "There was a large deer park owned by the Woosters northwest of the house, which was protected by the laws of the State." This park was undoubtedly the origin of the name "Park Road".

Sharpe continues:

"Captain John Wooster was perhaps the first man to start an industrial plant in the Seymour district. In 1760, he with three other men, (Thomas Perkins of Enfield, Ebenezer Keeney and Joseph Hull) purchased from the Indians an acre of land on the east side of the Naugatuck River at the falls, including the water privilege, for the purpose of putting up some iron works, but nothing was done until after October 4, 1763, when he with Keeney and Hull purchased more land on which was erected first a fulling mill, then a saw mill, and a grist mill. And in 1785, he and Bradford Steele leased at Rimmon Falls on the east side of the Naugatuck River a place for the purpose of building a blacksmith shop, and erecting a hammer to 'go by water'. They manufactured scythes and did other blacksmith work.

"That Captain John owned slaves, as was common in those days, is evident from the record of a town meeting, held in 1780, when it was voted 'that the authority and selectmen be empowered and directed to give certificates to Captain Holbrook and Captain John Wooster to free and emancipate their servants, Negro men, on the condition that the said Negro men enlist into the State Regiment to be raised for the defense of this State, for the town, one year."

THOMAS WOOSTER JR.

Thomas Wooster Jr. was born Feb. 18, 1692, son of Lieut. Thomas Sr. and Phoebe Tomlinson Wooster. He married Sarah, daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Gunn Hawkins. He was a member of the "committee" of St. Peter's church, Oxford in 1766, at which time he was 74 years old. In 1770, he was one of the first two lay readers of that church.

THOMAS WOOSTER 3d was a younger brother of Capt. John Wooster. He was born in 1724 and married Lois Hawkins, daughter of Eleazar and Damaris Hawkins. The genealogy of the Wooster family given in "Seymour Past and Present" says that he and his wife lived on Jack's Hill in Oxford, but a short biography in the same book says that "in the time of the Revolution, Thomas Wooster, a brother of Capt. John, lived nearly opposite the house of Capt. John.

There were several others of the Wooster family who, in one way or another were active in the life of Oxford. Among these were Timothy, born in 1670, who is said to have resided in Quaker Farms, and his name is included in the list of "Proprietors of Quaker's Farm Purchase" dated March, 1727. One of his descendants was Ruth Ann Wooster who married Phineas Terrell of Bethany. She became a benefactor of St. Peter's church. Another of Timothy Wooster's

descendants was Arthur Wooster. In 1795, his name is included in the list of members of St. Peter’s church as “Mr. Arthur Wooster”, the title showing that he was highly respected. His son, Nathan Wooster was a graduate of Yale College.

ZACHARIAH HAWKINS

Zachariah Hawkins was born February 8, 1717, in Derby, son of Joseph Jr. and Elizabeth Gunn Hawkins. They resided on the home-
stead of Joseph Hawkins Sr. at Derby Neck. It will be remembered that Joseph Hawkins Sr. was recorded as being one of the eight who were the inhabitants of Paugaset in 1667. In 1727, Joseph Hawkins Jr.’s name is contained in the list of “Proprietors of the Quakers’ Farm Purchase”, his share amounting to 201 lbs, 15 shillings. He had fourteen children of whom Zachariah was the twelfth.

Zachariah Hawkins was a shoemaker by trade. He was married four times and possibly five. His gravestone in Hillside Cemetery (Old South Burying Grounds) in Quaker Farms bears the following in-
scription:

S.H.	M.H.	Z.H.	R.H.
1741	1774	1806	1786

“By this stone are deposited the remains of Capt. Zachariah Haw-
kins, a worthy and respectable member of society, who in the 90th
year of his age, died in faith and hope, June 27, MDCCCVI. He had
14 children who all survive him, 82 grand children and 95 great
grand children. Sarah, his first wife, is buried in Derby, by whom
he had Sarah and Mercy. Mary, his 2nd wife is buried 12 feet on
the left of this stone, by whom he had Mary, John, Elizabeth,
Elijah, Anna, Gaylord, Ruth, Silas, Joseph, Moses and Isaac.
Rachel, his 3rd wife, lies close by this on the left, by whom he
had Zachariah. Lydia his relict and his sons erect this monument,
their tribute of gratitude, love and honor.”

Sharpe’s “Oxford Sketches, Part 2” gives the date under “S.H.” as
1771, but a recent examination shows clearly 1741. Also, Zachariah
married Mary Tomlinson in 1743, so Sarah must have died before
that. The “Genealogy of the Hawkins Family” given in “Seymour Past
and Present” says that Zachariah married Mary ---- August 18, 1773
after the death of Mary Tomlinson and before his marriage to Mrs.
Rachel Perry, but no authority is given for this statement, and if the
marriage occurred, the family apparently did not recognize it, as no
mention is made of it on Zachariah’s grave stone.

The grave stone of Mrs. Lydia Thomas, the last wife of Zachariah
bears this inscription:

"Mrs. Lydia Thomas, an amiable woman. She was wife of Nathan Taylor of Litchfield, and Capt. Zachariah Hawkins of Oxford. She died Aug. 4, 1820."

An article in the "Seymour Record" of April 2, 1891, says "Capt. Hawkins was one of the patriarchs of the Quaker's Farm Purchase". This statement is not strictly correct, in as much as it was his father who was one of the Proprietors. However, Zachariah became a large land owner.

In 1760, he was appointed a Captain of a "Train-band" (His majesty's Militia) he then being 43 years old. He was prominent in public affairs, serving as a selectman in 1762 and continuing as such through 1766. In February of 1783, he was appointed to oversee and make a new highway from Woodbury to Derby by the Ousatonic River. This of course was on the east side of the river. The northern portion of the road was flooded when the Stevenson Dam was built and Lake Zoar formed.

Before the Revolution, "some considerable division of sentiment existed as to the propriety of engaging in a war of resistance to the mother country. This made it necessary to watch the movement of all persons throughout the country, lest enemies at home might do more harm than any abroad." So in Derby a "Committee of Inspection" was formed for that purpose Dec. 11, 1775, of which Capt. Hawkins was a member. During the Revolution, he was a Tory but must have outlived it, for Judge Wilcoxson said of him in a Centennial Address delivered in 1876, "he was a substantial man of sound judgment and a valuable citizen". Several of his descendants still live in Oxford, active in town and church affairs.

Capt. Zachariah Hawkins' Commission

Zachariah Hawkins was appointed a Captain of a "train band" in 1760, - his commission reading as follows:

"Thomas Fitch, Esq.

Captain General and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Colony of Connecticut in New England.

To Zachariah Hawkins, Gent. Greeting.

You being by the General Assembly of this Colony accepted to be Captain of the 13th Company or Train band in the second Regiment in this Colony, Reposing special Trust and Confidence in your Loyalty, Courage and good Conduct, I do, by Virtue of the Letters Patents from the Crown of England to this Corporation, Me thereunto enabling, Appoint and Impower you to take the said Train band into your Care and Charge as their Captain, carefully and diligently to discharge that Trust; Exercising your Inferior Officers and Soldiers in the Use of their Arms according to the Discipline of War: Keeping them in good Order and Government and

commanding them to Obey you as their Captain for His Majesty's Service. And you are to observe all such Orders and Directions as from Time to Time you shall receive either from Me, or from (SEAL) other your Superior Officer, pursuant to the Trust hereby reposed in you. Given under my Hand and the Seal of this Colony, in Hartford, the 22nd day of March, in the 33d year of the Reign of Sovereign Lord George the Second, King of Great Britain etc.

Annoque Domini 1760

By his Honor's Command

George Wyllis, Secr

Thos. Fitch"

DAVID TOMLINSON

One of the most prominent men in the early 1800's was David Tomlinson, son of Capt. Isaac and Sibyl Russel Tomlinson. His great grandfather, Jonas Tomlinson, was one of the first to receive a grant of land at Paugasset on Derby Neck. In Judge Wilcoxson's 1876 Centennial historical address, he says of David Tomlinson, "He entered Quaker Farms an emigrant from Woodbury and that when young; I should think from information given me, at the age of 18 or 20." (As David was born in 1761, he therefore came to Quaker Farms about 1779 or 1781) "He was then placed in charge of land owned by his father." (His house was on the west side of Quaker Farms Road, a short distance north of Christ Church). "He married Lorena Bacon, daughter of Jabez Bacon of Woodbury. He was a merchant, and as such an extensive operator. He began in a small way and enlarged as he advanced, as I was told, first occupying a room in the chamber of his dwelling as a sales-room. He was remarkably successful in his business. His business as a merchant was extensive beyond that known of any other for many miles radius; and not the less so were his operations as an agriculturalist. His acres numbered 1500. Whatever the soil, he applied what was suitable to the peculiarity. Seldom did his land lie idle for lack of application. Possessed of keen discernment, he at once saw as he set his eye on the spot, what he could put there. The late Judge Phelps of Woodbury remarked of Mr. Tomlinson that he was the best specimen of a patroon there was in Connecticut.

"He chartered vessels, fitted and put out to sea. Once his vessel and cargo were taken by French privateers. Such, and other losses embarrassed his estate.

"He was sent eleven times to the Connecticut House of Representatives, and when he died, which occurred March, 1822, aged 60 years, he was a member of the State Senate. He was quite generally known as "Squire Tomlinson". He and his wife Lorena were largely instrumental in the building of Christ Church, Quaker Farms. Two of their great-great grandsons still live in Quaker Farms, active in church and town affairs.



David Tomlinson, Merchant, of Quaker's Farm.



Lorena Bacon Tomlinson, Wife of David Tomlinson

CHAPTER 7

SLAVES IN OXFORD

It seems strange that slavery should have been countenanced in New England, which had been settled by such pious men. One writer points out that "society at that time was based on the belief that men were naturally divided into classes". Also, and still more curiously, people then held that slavery was recognized and sanctioned in the Bible. The famous Theophilus Eaton of New Haven quoted from the Old Testament book of Leviticus, Chapter 25, Verses 45 and 46 in support of his possessing slaves, - "Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, - they shall be your possession, - they shall be your bondmen forever". There do not, however, seem to have been a great many slaves owned in New Haven County, - it being stated that the maximum number in 1755 was 226, and by 1800 only 80.

The earliest slaves were Indians who had either been taken in battle or who had surrendered. A law passed in 1727 directed that masters of Indian children must teach them to read and instruct them in the Christian faith. But Negro slavery began also at an early date, and it was counted a mark of social distinction to own a slave.

There is little on record to tell how prevalent Slavery was in Oxford. Among those who are reported to have owned a least one slave was Capt. Zachariah Hawkins of Quaker Farms, whose descendants say he owned an Indian slave woman. Also the Holbrook family, one of whose slaves was the locally well known Negro man, "Titus". The present "Moose Hill Road" included the western portion of Holbrook Road (now known as "Great Hill Road"), between Rock House Hill Road and Moose Hill Road. Just west of the junction of Holbrook Road and Moose Hill Road, a road runs eastward, known as "Titus Lane". Its junction with Holbrook Road was known as "Tites' Corners". Titus belonged to John Holbrook, and desired to enter the Revolutionary War to fight for the independence of the Colonies. As all John Holbrook's sons were in the army, Titus was persuaded to remain and help his master until the war was over, and then receive his freedom and a tract of land. This he did, and in due time it is said that Titus built a little house eastward from the corners.

Another owner of slaves was the Nettleton family.

"On a knoll west of Tite's Corners and the Four Mile Brook was a house known as the Gunn-Nettleton place. It was built by Abel Gunn whose daughter Agens married Josiah Nettleton, hence the

name "Gunn-Nettleton". Later it was occupied by John Riggs and still later by Abraham Scranton. It was apparently still standing as late as 1919, for it is mentioned in the 1919 edition of "Seymour Past and Present". which says, - "On the west end of the house there was a large ell containing the kitchen and other rooms. Over the kitchen was a little room where lived for many years the Negro slave known as "Black Sim". Sim was a faithful slave, and when he received his freedom, he had no desire to leave his old master (Nettleton) so he served well, remaining here as long as he lived".

As we have already related, Capt. Daniel Holbrook and Capt John Wooster were authorized to free their servants, Negro men, on condition that they enlist into the State regiment for one year. This indicates that Capt. Wooster also owned one or more slaves.

One of the members of the Lum family is said to have owned slaves. His house was on Rock House Hill, just back of what was known (in 1919) as the Henry Treat place. A little west of the old Lum house (now gone), there was a room where it is said "the slaves of the family lived".

Another possible indication of the presence of slaves in Oxford is given in a resolution passed at a meeting of St. Peter's Episcopal Church, April 18, 1829, "Voted, that the lower slip (or pew) next the door on the south side of the church be no longer reserved for the use of the blacks, but instead thereof, the pew in the south west corner of the gallery". These Negroes, while probably not slaves at that late date, probably were so originally.

Altogether, slavery existed for some two hundred years in Connecticut and was not abolished by legal enactment until 1848, and the act provided that if a slave came to want, his former master would support him. But it is said that slavery was virtually non-existent in Connecticut by 1816.

CHAPTER 8

TAVERNS AND TAVERN KEEPERS

Historians agree that the position of Tavern Keeper in New England in the early 1800's was an honorable one. They were appointed by the town, and were expected to, and did keep their rooms neat, have good beds, and provide good food. One traveler from France wrote in 1795 that he was amazed how good the New England tavern was. This seems to have been the case in Oxford, for it is recorded that at a Town Meeting held in January 1803 "the following gentlemen were chosen tavern keepers, Josiah Washband Jr., Reuben Bunnell, Gideon Tucker, Daniel Cande and Wait Garrett". These were all men of standing in the community.

The locations of the tavern kept by Josiah Washband and that by Daniel Cande are readily identifiable and that of Gideon Tucker may have been the one on the southern end of Riggs street, known at one time as "Back St." and the foundations of which still remain. But the taverns of Reuben Bunnell and Wait Garrett seem to have been lost in obscurity. Other taverns of record in Oxford were those on Oxford Road south of the center the one kept by Capt. John Wooster, and the other by his brother Thomas (3rd).

The name "Washband" seems to have been a corruption of the name "Washburn", some records spelling it one way and some the other, but the tavern seems generally to have been known as the "Washband" Tavern. It is the building still standing on the east side of Oxford Road known for many years as the Pope house and is now the residence of Mr. Stanley Seccombe. The original building is said to have been a small one story and attic house, built by John Twitchell in 1714 and containing "but one room below with pantry and cupboard, and one of these was under the stairs". How long John Twitchell held the property is uncertain, but he seems to have removed to Oxford Center some time prior to 1741, for in that year he was one of the "North Farmers" who signed the petition for the creation of Oxford Parish. This indicates that he was living in his house on Academy Road, and this is further corroborated by the Derby Land Records which show the house as being his at that date.

If John Twitchell sold the little house to the Washband family around 1741, it must have been John and Sarah Gunn Washband who were the

purchasers, for their son, Josiah Washband Sr. was at that time but four years old, he having been born in 1737. He, Josiah Sr., married Sarah Harger, and their son, Josiah Washband Jr., born in 1769 is said to have "run away" to Long Island in 1793 (when he was twenty-four years old) and married there, to Catherine Smith. From the expression, "run away" it would seem that there was some opposition to the match in the family, but nevertheless the young couple returned to the Washband family homestead in Oxford some time before 1803, when Josiah was appointed tavern keeper. His mother, Sarah Gunn Washband had died in 1790, and young Catherine, upon her coming to Oxford, apparently "took over". She is said to have been a very smart young woman and to have figured largely in the success of the tavern under Josiah Jr.'s management.

Josiah Washburn Sr. had operated the house as a tavern before his son, and some time before the Revolution had enlarged the house. He further enlarged it around 1794 or 1795 at the time when New Haven was building the "long wharf" so as to make that city a "port of entry". Soon after this there was large trade for many miles around, and much of it came over the new Oxford Turnpike and passed the Washband tavern.

The second enlargement really constituted a separate house, "set at the same angle as the old one. It was built in the best style, with plank siding to make it warm and strong. The rooms were large, facing the south, one on each corner, the front door and stairs being between, in addition to the great chimney and fire places. These rooms have low ceilings but are exceedingly pleasant, looking out upon the gentle slope of the lawn to the bridge and Little River, and off to the hills.

"Back of the front room was the bar room, extending the length of the house, making another pleasant room, the bar proper being at the east end and somewhat secluded by a little partition. The work on the rooms was of the best order. In the bar room was a long mantel above the great fire place, and above the mantel it was finished in woodwork something like a large panel painted a dark brown and grained by the painter in a most artistic way, still remaining in its original form. In the east front room, there is a corner closet decorated with fancy wood work, as is the rest of the room. Above the mantels of these rooms, it is finished in wood. The entrance to the bar room is principally through a large door on the west side, a door which is set in about four feet, having little windows at the sides. The large ball room is above, where history has been made. In the height of the season this room was fitted out with several cord bedsteads to accommodate a goodly number of persons. The house contained seventeen rooms, nine below and eight above so that many could be accommodated at one time."

(The foregoing account of the Washband Tavern is taken from "Seymour Past and Present", by W. C. Sharpe, edition of 1919.)

The house is listed in the Connecticut Tercentenary program as "the Pope House" it then being occupied as the residence of Mr. Albert Pope.

The Washband (or Washburn) family occupied the house for at least four generations. As to the spelling of the name, it is given as "Washband" in the 1803 vote appointing Josiah as tavern keeper. Deeds dated 1847 spell it "Washburn" while others dated 1853 give it as "Washband", and the latter spelling is used on the 1868 map of Oxford.

The Capt. John Wooster Tavern

(As described in "Seymour Past and Present" by W. C. Sharpe)

Located near the north west corner of Oxford and Park Roads stood the building known in the time of the revolution as the Capt. John Wooster Tavern. "There had been a mill property there prior to 1747 for there is a record of the sale of such a property in that year, the description of which indicates that it was at this location. Capt. John probably came there near 1750. South of the tavern was a fine level meadow of many acres on both sides of Little River. The old house is said to have been red at first but later was yellow, a large two story dwelling facing the east and Oxford Road, the back roof long and sloping to one storey. The general plan of the house differed but little from others of that date. The chimney was very large, being made of stone, with the usual fireplaces including one in the basement room, the corner of the house towards the corner of the roads. In later years, this basement room was used as a cider room. The rooms were large and a good number of them adapted for the purposes of a tavern. In the attic there was a place built for smoking hams.

The old house became famous because of Graham, the traitor, about whom more will be told herein in connection with the Revolution.

The Thomas Wooster Tavern

(As described in "Seymour Past and Present"). The tavern kept by Thomas Wooster (3d) was located at the south east corner of Oxford Road and the road leading to Rimmon Hill (now known as West St.) and just opposite the tavern kept by Capt John Wooster. It was a storey and a half house, facing west, standing a good distance back from the main (Oxford) road, on a natural rise of ground several feet high and much larger than the usual storey and a half house. Covering a large foundation, it was built on a generous plan, with high ceilings, with a large hall seven yards long and wide in proportion, the stairs being enclosed. On each side of the front door was a large hall window. The south front room was the bar room, and later used as the

parlor. Among the four rooms on the ground floor, the largest was the sitting room, directly back of the hall, which was also seven yards long, containing the big fireplace and oven, which would indicate that this room was at first intended for the living room and kitchen as well as the dining room, and was extensively used in the busy tavern days. The growing demand led to the building of a large ell on the north east corner, containing the dining room, kitchen etc. The house burned down in 1894.

The fact that three taverns, Capt. John, and Thomas Wooster, and Washband existed so close together is good evidence of the density of traffic along Oxford road in the 1700's.

The Oxford Hotel

Judge Wilcoxson, in his 1776 Centennial Address says, "The hotel building, now styled "Oxford House" was erected in 1795 by Daniel and Job Candee. The same was first and for many years occupied by Daniel Candee as inn holder." This was probably from 1795 to 1811. Daniel's wife was Lydia Wilmot.

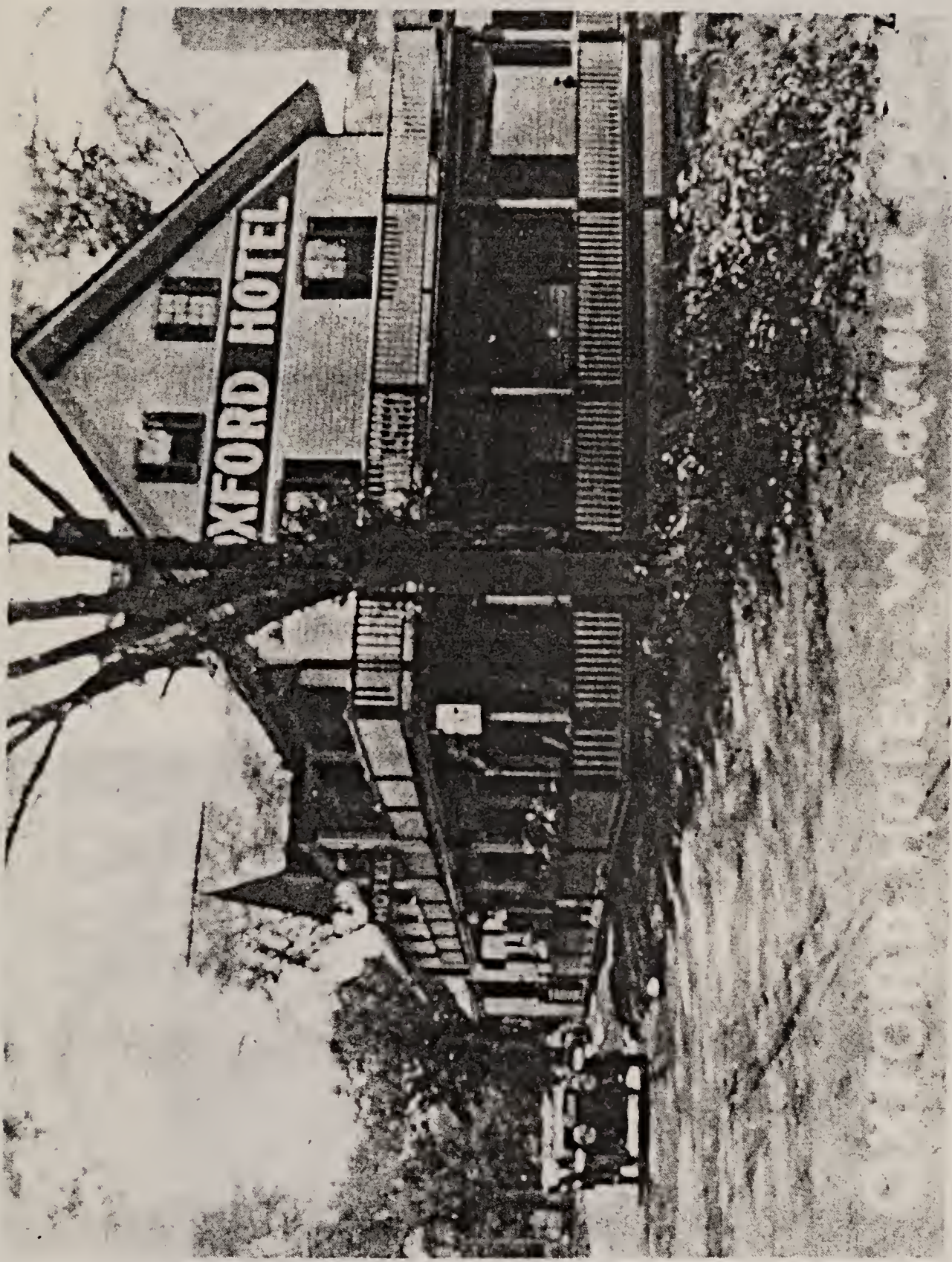
Judge Wilcoxson says further that Daniel Candee was the first Oxford Postmaster, but the records in Washington say that Walker Wilmot was the first to hold that office. He was the brother of Lydia Wilmot. The Judge continues, - "David Candee succeeded Daniel Candee as inn holder for forty years," (probably from 1811 to his death in 1851) His wife was Hannah Catlin.

The historian, Rockey, says "the Lums followed the Candees as inn keepers and re-modelled the house". The 1868 map of Oxford shows the hotel under the name of D. R. Lum (David R. Lum).

The foregoing coincides in general with a recent search of the Oxford Probate Court Records although there is a little confusion in early dates. The Probate Record is that David Candee came into ownership by inheritance in 1852, whereas he died in 1851, and Judge Wilcoxson says that David succeeded Daniel as inn holder for forty years, indicating that he started running the inn in 1811 or so. At any rate, Frederick Candee inherited the place from his father in 1853 and ran it for some twelve years. In 1865 David R. Lum inherited it. His name is shown as the owner on the 1868 map of Oxford and in that year Mary B. Lum inherited it and in 1873 she sold it to Franklin Lum. The next owners in succession were Harriet Warner and Charles M. Walcott. Then in 1885 George B. Oatman purchased the hotel and ran it for fourteen years, when in 1899 it was bought by Willa Gertrude Riley. About 1904 or possibly earlier, William A. Gabler ran it for the Rileys and then in 1910, Gabler bought the place. He died the next year, 1911, and his wife, Fannie O. B. Gabler owned (and presumably ran) the hotel for twenty eight years, when she died in 1939. Then her daughter, Erma Gabler Seeley inherited it and her husband, Eldridge E. Seeley had a Mr. Rapp run it. Then in 1941



The Oxford Hotel



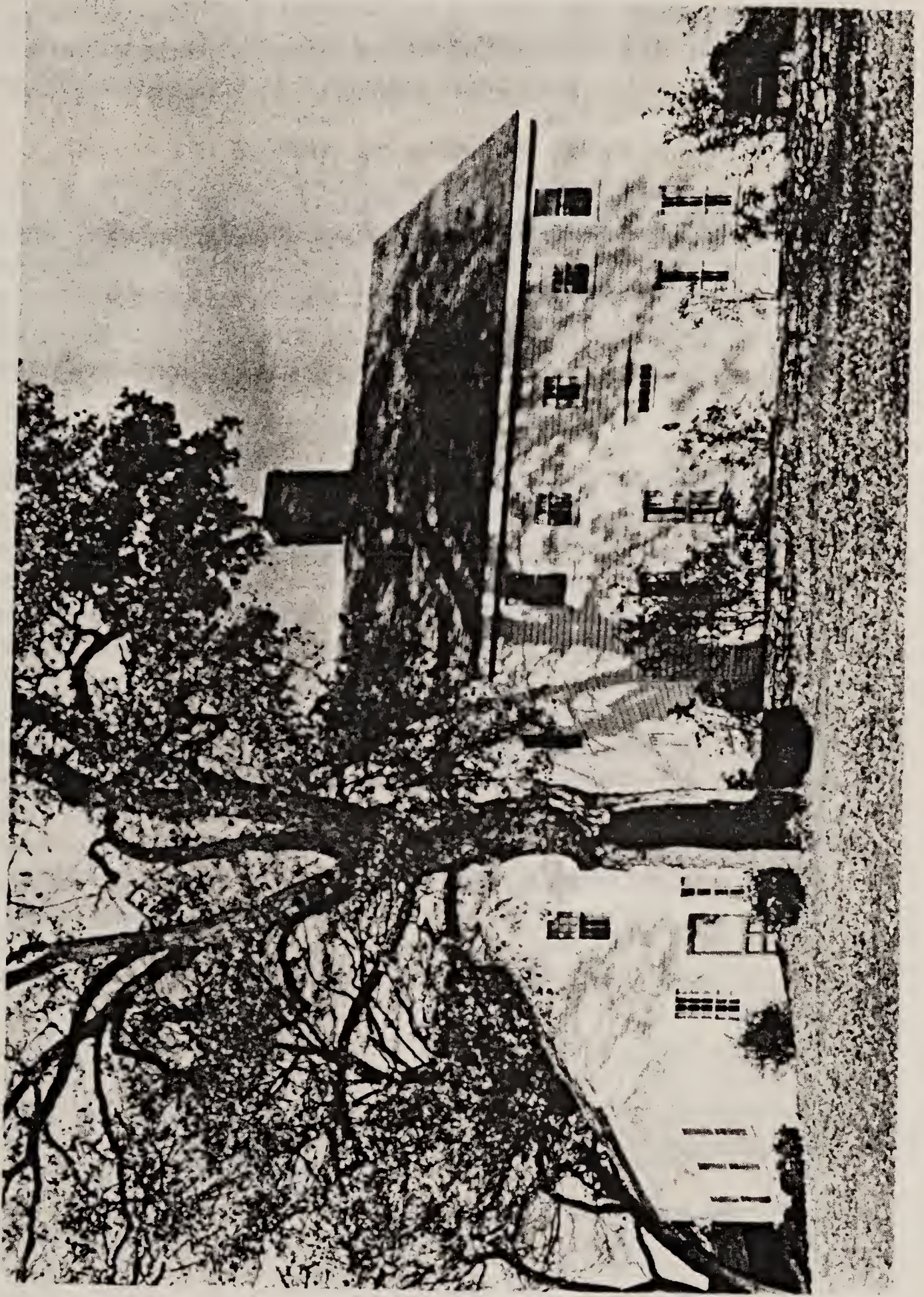
The Oxford Hotel in Early Automobile Time



The Oxford Hotel after being moved 30 ft. back from the highway.



The Seeley Residence, Formerly the Oxford Hotel, (now Oxford House)



The Washband Tavern

Mrs. Seeley died and in that year Mr. Seeley discontinued the hotel and remodelled it for his residence.

At the time that Oxford Road (Route 67) was concrete paved, the building was moved back thirty feet. In 1950, Mr. Seeley having died, the building was purchased by James and Dominica De Maio who opened "Oxford House" as a country restaurant.

The Hawkins Inn at Quaker Farms.

In the George Washington papers in the Library of Congress, a record is included which mentions one Zechariah Hawkins as "an Inn-keeper of Derby" during the Revolution, and old records in the possession of the Hawkins family corroborate this statement. It is thought to have been located on the west side of Quaker Farms Road at Seven Mile Brook.

Southford Inns.

That part of the town of Southbury which later became known as Southford, was so close to Oxford, particularly to "Red City" that its taverns and inns must have been used by the people of Oxford. "In the period of time when the Oxford Turnpike was the great thoroughfare between New Haven and Litchfield, Southford being twenty miles from the former place and twenty five miles from the latter, hotels were kept there and well patronized. The Bartholomew Hotel was kept in the old, long, one storey house about 1800 which stood a little to the east of where (in 1892) was the Turnpike bridge over the railroad. The Sherwood House was subsequently the private residence of Henry Hinman. The hotel known as the Oatman House for thirty five years was built by George Thompson in 1806 and first kept by him and then by his brother-in-law, Benjamin S. Hurd, followed by John Peck. Enos Foot was the landlord in 1845.

CHAPTER 9

THE REVOLUTION

In 1764 the English Parliament, under Prime Minister Grenville proposed the hated "Stamp Act", which was the first attempt of the English government to impose a tax on the colonists, and even though this particular form of tax was as little obnoxious as any tax could be, nevertheless it was the principle of having a tax fastened on them which their own legislatures had not passed, to which the colonists objected. In other and familiar words, "no taxation without representation." No doubt the citizens of Oxford joined in the hullabaloo which followed the passage of this act.

Protests against the act became so strong that in 1766 Parliament repealed it. The next year, however, the so-called Townshend acts were passed, imposing duties on various articles including tea. A board of customs commissioners was set up in Boston to administer the act, and as it was very unpopular also, British soldiers were sent to Boston to protect the officials. Their presence was still more unpopular and there was constant friction between the soldiers and the populace. Finally, on March 5, 1770, a guard of British soldiers in Boston fired into a crowd, killing several, and the fracas became known as the "Boston Massacre".

In the meantime, Parliament had repealed all the duties except that on tea, and things quieted down somewhat for a time. But in 1773, England proposed to let the East India Company sell tea, which it had stored in England, direct to the American colonies. When the ships came to Boston, the citizens decided that the tea should not be allowed to land. A number of them disguised themselves as Indians and on Dec. 16, 1773, boarded the ships and threw the tea into the water; this was the famous "Boston Tea Party". Parliament retaliated by closing the port of Boston until the tea should be paid for. But resistance merely became stronger, and Massachusetts appointed a Committee of Safety and Supply who armed and trained Minutemen "to be ready for military action at a minute's notice".

As early as Nov. 29, 1774, a special town meeting was called in Derby to consider "the doings of the Reputable Continental Congress held at Philadelphia, Sep. 5th 1774, Daniel Holbrook, Moderator". They agreed that the proposal of Congress was "a wise and judicious plan", and resolved that they would "faithfully adhere to and abide by the association entered into by said Congress". The meeting also

voted that the gentlemen hereafter named be a committee to see the same carried into execution; viz. Capt. John Holbrook, Mr. Henry Tomlinson, Maj. Jabez Tomlinson, Mr. John Picket, Capt. Thomas Clark, Mr. Abraham Smith, Henry Whitney, Capt. Joseph Riggs, Lieut. Bradford Steel and Lieut. Ebenezer Buckingham."

On the night of April 18, 1775, British troops marched on Concord, Massachusetts, to seize powder which Massachusetts had stored there, and to arrest Samuel Adams and John Hancock who were staying in Lexington. The same night, warned that the British had started on their way, Paul Revere and William Dawes started on their famous rides "through every Middlesex village and farm", shouting the news that the British were coming. The next day came the battles of Lexington and Concord and the British retreated to Boston.

The sentiment through all of New England was strongly in favor of aiding Boston in its fight to redress the wrongs committed by England. As an instance of that feeling in the vicinity of Oxford, we may cite the case of Capt. Isaac Tomlinson of Woodbury, whose descendants settled later in Quaker Farms. He enlisted May 15, 1775 (when he was 52 years old) under General David Wooster (who incidentally was an old Oxford boy) in the 3d Company. Capt. Tomlinson "marched for the relief of Boston, in the Lexington alarm" and his company served at the siege of Boston. He was discharged Dec. 1, 1775.

In a paper prepared by Epaphroditus Peck for the Connecticut Tercentenary Commission in 1934, he points out that while the entire sympathy of New England was with Massachusetts in their struggle, feeling was divided on the wisdom and propriety of seceding from England and setting up an independent government. Mr. Peck begins his paper by saying, "A large proportion of Americans have been imbued with the idea that the American Revolution was a spontaneous and practically unanimous uprising of the colonists against tyranny and oppression, and the Tories, or Loyalists were a small group of obstinate and evil minded persons who amply deserved whatever harsh treatment they received. Recent studies by impartial historians have shown, however, that this conception of our Revolutionary history is very far from true."

He continues, "In Connecticut the line of separation between the patriots who supported the Revolution and the loyalists who supported the King, was more clearly marked than anywhere else, and coincided generally with the line of denominational cleavage. The great body of Congregational ministers and their parishioners were firm in their resistance to the royal power, and, when the time seemed right for independence; while the Churchmen, or Anglicans, led by the clergymen were equally united in loyalty to the king and in opposition to what they considered rebellion and treason." He quotes Prof. Siebert, who made a careful study of the loyalist party in Connecticut, that Connecticut had about 2000 male loyalists at the beginning of the

Revolution. How many loyalists there were in Oxford and Derby is not known definitely, but the authors of "The History of the Old Town of Derby", give it as their opinion that in the whole town of Derby, (including as it did, the parish of Oxford), when the true feeling of the English government toward the colonies became manifest, there were not over thirty families that definitely assumed the Tory platform.

The feeling of the extreme patriots in Derby at the outset of the Revolution is shown by the appointment Dec. 11, 1775 of a "Committee of Inspection", to "watch the movements of persons, lest enemies at home might be more harm than any abroad". It will be noted that this action was taken some six months before the Declaration of Independence. The members of this committee were:

Capt. John Holbrook	Capt. John Tomlinson
Mr. Henry Tomlinson	Daniel Holbrook Esq.
Col. Jabez Thompson	Capt. Zechariah Hawkins
Mr. Joseph Pickett	Sheldon Clark
Capt. Thomas Clark	Mr. Noah Tomlinson
Mr. Abraham Smith	Capt. Nathaniel Johnson
Mr. Thomas Yale	Capt. Timothy Baldwin
Mr. John Coe	Mr. John Howd
Capt. Nathan Smith	Mr. John Humphrey
Lieut. John Bassett	Mr. John Riggs Jr.
Capt. Joseph Riggs	Mr. Ebenezer Keeney
Lieut. Bradford Steele	Capt. Ebenezer Gracey
Capt. Ebenezer Buckingham	James Beard Esq.
Charles French Esq.	Mr. Agar Tomlinson
John Davis Esq.	Mr. Benjamin Tomlinson
Eliphalet Hotchkiss Esq.	Samuel Wheeler Jr.

By 1777 suspicion was still rife apparently in Derby as that year, all male citizens of lawful age were required to take or repeat the oath of fidelity.

Capt. Isaac Tomlinson of Woodbury was one of those who, while apparently a good patriot, highly indignant at Great Britain's treatment of Boston, nevertheless clung to the idea that the dispute could be settled peaceably. This is shown by the record of "The Ministers of the Governor and Council of Safety" dated January 1777, which reads in part: "Capt. Isaac Tomlinson was sent here by the Civil Authority of Woodbury as being a person dangerous to the community ----Now he declared before this council that he never so well understood the state of the dispute-----therefore it is resolved that he is permitted to return to his family at Woodbury and to remain in his own business within the limits of Woodbury and Derby"

Capt. Tomlinson was fifty-four years old at the time, and, from the conciliatory action of the council he must have been highly respected. Nevertheless, he was to remain "within the limits of

Woodbury and Derby". His sons, Isaac Jr. (aged 25) and Russel (aged 23) were more pronouncedly pro-British. The following letters, the originals of which were preserved by the late Miss Mary Meigs of Waterbury, formerly of Quaker Farms, are now in the files of the New Haven Colony Historical Society. The first is from Isaac Tomlinson Jr. in Long Island, N. Y. to his brother Russel, still at home in Woodbury, Connecticut.

Long Island 12 Feby 1777

Sir:

I am at Last safely landed on Long Island among frens (sic) not so far to the westard as I could wish but the wind being High we dare not venture ourselves in the Sound, night being just on us. when I shall have another opportunity to write to you is uncertain but the first that offer I shall Embrace. do all you can to Live in peace a few months when I hope you and all our friends will be protected from the Rage of those usurpers who now bear rule. I am in good health and Remain your affectionate brother

Isaac Tomlinson, Jr.

Russel Tomlinson

The second letter indicates that Russel Tomlinson had joined his brother, Isaac Jr. in New York City, so apparently they had both espoused the British cause. It is written by their father, Isaac Sr. in Woodbury and is addressed to the older of his two sons, Isaac Jr. Capt. Tomlinson kept a copy of his letter, and it is this copy which has been preserved.

Woodbury, 15th Janury 1780

Dear Son,

I have received your Letter by Mr. Bull dated 15 Novr on the 10th. Instant in which you inform me of your good State of health together with Russel's, his wife and other Friends which gives me real pleasure to hear. My family with friends in general here are well and send their respects to you with Russel and other friends in New York hoping there may be some way to accomodate the unhappy differences which now separates friends and acquaintances hope you will as often as opportunity serves inform me of your circumstances, I am your affectionate Father

Isaac Tomlinson.

(This document is marked on the back "Jany 15, 1780, copy of a letter sent to Isaac Tomlinson").

This letter was written just three years after Capt. Isaac was haled before the Council of Safety. Russel's wife, referred to in the letter was Agnes Courtelyou of Brooklyn, N. Y.

Zachariah Hawkins also was a Tory Sympathizer even though in 1775, he had been a member of a "Committee of Inspection" formed

in Derby "to watch the movement of persons, lest enemies at home might be more harm than abroad". Apparently, therefore, he was one of those, who though feeling that England was wrong in its treatment of the colonies could not go along with the idea of armed resistance to the mother country. For in the Washington papers in the Congressional Library, there is record of the action of a man named Zechariah Hawkins, an innkeeper in Derby who confessed May 2d, 1777 to having planned raids on American stores in Derby and New Haven. While the record does not prove positively that he was Capt. of Quaker's Farm, nevertheless, records in the possession of the latter's descendants do show that he kept an inn in Quaker's Farm, and that he had been suspected of being "Toryfied". Thus in the "Seymour Record" of March 29th 1894, an account is given of a visit to Vermont by Capt. Hawkins in 1780, as follows:

"In Revolutionary days it became necessary to require of strangers travelling in New England some guarantee of their purpose and patriotism."

Below is such a document given to Zachariah Hawkins who went to attend business relating to a farm of 200 acres which he purchased in Castleton, Vt; in 1773.

"Castleton August 5th A.D. 1780

May it please your Exelency Capt. Zachariah Hawkins is Come to this Town to Take Care of a farm he has here and some people say he is Toryfied which makes him afraid to Execute his Business But we have no suspicion of his being upon any Evil Design towards the United State.

This from your Humble Servants

Percy Sturtevant :

Reuben Moulton : Selectmen

Brewster Higby :

to Thomas Chittenden"

On the back is the following endorsement

"By the Governor

The bearer Capt. Zachariah Hawkins is permitted to Pass from this to Castleton about his Necessary Bizness he behaving him Self friendly to this and the United State.

Arlington, 15th August 1780

Thomas Chittenden

To whom it may concern"

Thomas Chittenden (born 1730 died 1797) was the first Governor of Vermont. Castleton is about 10 miles due west of Rutland, Vermont and Arlington about 40 miles south.

So Capt. Hawkins had bought a farm in Castleton, Vt., in 1773 and

in 1780 journeyed there "to attend to business relating to the farm." It is said that cattle raising flourished there in Vermont about this time; the drovers driving them down to Connecticut where they were sold, so possibly this may have been what Hawkins was doing, i.e. raising cattle in Vermont for sale in Connecticut.

But despite his Tory leanings, Capt. Hawkins apparently did not forfeit the respect of the people of Oxford, as his memory was held in good esteem by succeeding generations as is instanced by the 1876 Centennial Address of Judge Wilcoxson in which he said that Capt. Hawkins was a "substantial man of sound judgment and a valuable citizen."

Derby went on record in support of the Continental Army in 1777 when a town meeting held Feb. 10th voted "that those of us who have beyond what we want for our own consumption, will readily and cheerfully sell them for money or produce at the price in said act (of Dec. 18, 1776) stated, and that we will esteem all persons who shall not do the same, enemies to their country, and treat them accordingly." On Dec. 8, 1777, a committee for this purpose was formed, consisting of John Coe, David DeForest and Capt. Thomas Clark.

At a town meeting held Dec. 28, 1778, it was voted "to give to each soldier in the Continental Army that counts for the Town of Derby, Ten Pounds money in lew (sic) of the linnin overhauls, linnin shirts, and shoes that was voted to them as a bounty" and a town tax for that purpose was laid of one shilling nine pence on the pound.

In December 1778, a committee was appointed to provide clothing for the soldiers, consisting of: Saml Hull, David DeForest, Abraham Beecher, Capt. John Tomlinson, Capt. Timothy Baldwin, Capt John Riggs, Lieut. Samuel Wheeler, Saml Basit, Danl Holbrook, Jun, Capt Joseph Riggs, Ruben Tucker, Capt Nathaniel Johnson, Jos. Russell, Noah Tomlinson, Thomas Clark Esq., John Howd, Capt John Holbrook, Edward Howd, Thadeus Baldwin, and others. Of these, the following were from the Oxford District: Capt John Riggs, Lieut. Samuel Wheeler, Noah Tomlinson, Samuel Baset and possibly others.

June 27, 1780 a rate of sixpence was voted "to pay the bounty to the Continental soldiers and to defray town charges," and Capt. John Riggs, Capt. Daniel Holbrook and Capt. Bradford Steel were "appointed a comtte to enlist continental soldiers and to pay them their bounty." It was also voted "that the town shall give each man that shall enlist himself as a soldier into the Continental Army during the war shall receive of the town as a bounty the sum of £ 20, to be paid in bills of credit of this state at the time of the muster, and £20 at the commencement of the second year of their service, and £ 20 at the commencement of the 3d year of their service. And all such as shall list for three years into the Continental Army shall receive in bills of credit of this state £20 at the time of passing muster, and £15 at the commencement of the 3rd year of their service. And also

all such persons as have or shall enlist into the Continental service for one year and seven months from the date of these presents shall receive £10 at passing muster and £5 at the commencement of the 2nd campaign."

As usual, war gave a false stimulation to business, and transportation of goods on Connecticut highways became such a problem, that by 1778, Governmental Supervision of it became necessary, and the Court passed the following law:

"Feb. 1778 - An Act for Regulating the Transportation of private property by Ox Teams.

Whereas the transporting of private property or the goods and effects of particular persons from place to place through the State has greatly increased, and employs so great a number of Oxen as threatens to lessen agriculture and the raising of grain and provisions for the use of the people and shortens the supply of beef for the use of the United States ARMY: be it enacted by the Governor, Council and Representatives in General Court assembled, That from and after the first day of April next, no private property -----shall be transported ----- on any waggons, cars, carts or carriages drawn by ----more than one pair of oxen."

Graham, the Traitor.

A man named Alexander Graham, who had deserted the American cause was commissioned by Gen. Howe to enlist soldiers for the British army. In March 1780, with a party of men he attacked and robbed the house of Capt. Ebenezer Dayton in Bethany, who at the time of the robbery was away in Boston, leaving only Mrs. Dayton, the children and servants in the house.

Capt. Dayton had previously lived in Brookfield, L. I. where he had a mercantile business, and had carried on privateering on Long Island Sound against the enemy. Because of his zeal for the patriot cause, on one occasion in East Hampton, L. I. he was mobbed and carried out of town, though ill with the measles at the time. To avoid further bad treatment he had moved from Brookfield to Bethany.

After robbing the Dayton house of £450 in cash and large bundles of silk goods, they set off for Gunntown and on the way met a young lad named Chauncey Judd who was known by some of the robbers. Graham wanted to have Judd killed, to prevent him betraying them, but was prevented from doing so by the lad's friends. The robbers had many narrow escapes from pursuing officers and a vigilance committee and finally hid in a barn on the Oxford road about one mile and one half above what is now Seymour, to wait for the passing of a severe snow storm, and were almost famished. They tried to get food from Capt. John Wooster's tavern on Oxford and Park Roads but were unable to do so, and they therefore started through the deep snow in the night, over Great Hill to Derby.

Upon arriving at Derby, they escaped in a whale boat across the Sound to Brookhaven. But an old sea captain in Stratford had gone up into the belfry of the church there, and had watched their course. This becoming known to the Derby patriots, a party of thirty of them, led by Capt. Bradford Steele gathered at Derby, and in two well armed whale boats rowed down the Housatonic River and across the Sound, and captured all the robbers but one, all being found in a deep sleep.

After returning to Derby with their prisoners, they turned them over to the army for trial. Graham, being a deserter from the American cause was found guilty of treason and was executed in Morristown, N. J. Two were allowed to turn State's Evidence and the others suffered fines, or imprisonment or both. Three were sentenced to four years imprisonment in Newgate state prison. The young lad, Chauncey Judd received \$4000. for his injuries, his hands having been frozen, and he was crippled for life. Capt. Dayton received compensation for damages.

This is about the only warlike action to have taken within the confines of Oxford. The story was made into a novel by Israel Warren, entitled "Chauncey Judd."

The tradition of the following event has been handed down to Miss Bernice Hull of Oxford from her Grandmother Hull who lived on a farm on Bowers Hill thought to have been owned by John Hyde and at which the event occurred. Miss Hull says that while this tradition has no hard and fast facts to back it up, she feels confident that it is true, and there appears to be nothing to show that it is otherwise. No date is given for the happening.

John Salem Hyde was baptized in the Oxford Congregational Church Nov. 2, 1775, but how old he was at the time is unknown. He was admitted as a Freeman Sep. 21, 1801, twenty six years after his baptism, but again his age is not mentioned. It is known that the Continental Army was short of soldiers in 1780, offering a bounty to any man enlisting, so it seems likely that this incident may have occurred in that year. The account seems to indicate that he was young, strong and athletic. Assuming therefore that he was fifteen at the time, it would make the date of his birth 1765, and his age at baptism 10 years and at his admission as a Freeman 36, all entirely possible. Miss Hull's story follows:

"In the town of Oxford on Bowers Hill in Revolutionary days, there stood a farmhouse owned and occupied by Mr. John Hyde. The chimney of this house was probably ten feet square and it boasted five fireplaces as well as a large brick oven where the family baking was done. Mr. Hyde had a son named John Salem Hyde. As the American army was seriously depleted, it became necessary to secure raw recruits, but John did not wish to enlist in the army. Armed and equipped with the required papers, the officers started out to secure him.

One can easily imagine the family seated in the long kitchen before the fireplace, quietly chatting about the news of the day, when their conversation was suddenly interrupted by the sound of horses' hoofs. Someone exclaimed, "It's the officers after John!" The officers asked in vain, for John had vanished like a spirit. After calling him, they began a search of the house from attic to cellar. The hunt became more exciting as members of the family joined in the search.

Angered at their defeat, the officers went to the barn to continue their pursuit, but no trace of John did they find. Despairing of capturing him alive, they ran their bayonets into the hay mows, hoping at least to secure his body. The mother, growing frantic called again and again to her son to give himself up. It was all in vain. With oaths and curses the officers finally mounted their horses and rode away.

The great mental strain was more than the mother could bear, and she could only moan, "Have you seen anything of John Salem Hyde today, Have you seen anything of John Salem Hyde?" After the officers had departed, and quiet had once more been restored, John appeared to tell his story.

When the officers were announced, unnoticed by anyone, he mounted the large open chimney and, securing a foothold on one of the cross sections, had remained there unseen and unheard until the officers were miles away.

His mother never regained her reason. Quiet as usual, she went about her daily tasks, but to everyone she saw she asked the same questions, "Have you seen anything of John Salem Hyde; have you seen anything of John Salem Hyde today?"

The old house was bought by John Hull, was burned about 1897, and a new one erected on the same site. The old latch which was on the outside door and lifted by the officers in search of John, was rescued after the fire. It is now in the Mansfield House in Ansonia. The same old barn where the haymows were pierced by the officers' bayonets is still standing (1957) as a lone sentinel on Bowers Hill.

OXFORD MEN WHO SERVED IN THE REVOLUTION

When we consider that the parish of Oxford during the Revolution did not have over eight hundred inhabitants, with probably not more than one hundred and fifty men of sufficient age to be called on for service in the armed forces, it is not surprising to find that the total number of soldiers recorded as being Oxford men is small. Again we are confronted with the difficulty of separating them out of the total of soldiers from Derby, which then still included the parish of Oxford.

The complete list of Connecticut men who served in the

Revolution is contained in the book published in 1889 by authority of the General Assembly, entitled "Record of Service of Connecticut Men in the War of the Revolution", but the only separation of men from Oxford that is given is in the census of pensioners made in 1840, as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Edward Bassett, age 84 | 5. Timothy Johnson, age 82 |
| 2. Prudence Lounsbury, age 76 | 6. Job Candee, age 80 |
| 3. Samuel Candee, age 87 | 7. Uri Scott |
| 4. Phineas Johnson, age 79 | |

"The History of Derby" lists seven men which it says were soldiers from Oxford and drew pensions afterwards, # 3, 4, 5, 6 as above, and

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
| 8. David Peck | 10. Isaac Chatfield |
| 9. Jeremiah Kelley | |

Combining the two lists, we get the following record of ten men:

1. Edward Bassett:

He served in the First Regiment (Gen. Wooster's 1775) which marched with Capt. Thomas Clark in the 3d company from the Town of Derby for the relief of Boston in the Lexington Alarm, enlisting May 16, 1775 and being discharged Dec. 20th of that year. In the next Spring, he enlisted June 25, 1776 in Col. Couch's company of Col. Bradley's Battalion, Gen. Wadsworth's Brigade, and was discharged Jan. 11, 1777. He then enlisted May 19, 1777 in the second Troop of Sheldon's Light Dragoons and "served for the duration of the war". Despite the last statement he is also listed among the levies from the State of Connecticut that served in the 2d Regiment of Artillery in the year 1780, enlisting July 15th and discharged Dec 22d.

2. Prudence Lousnbury:

The only record of him is in the list of pensioners in 1840, with no account of his service.

3. Samuel Candee:

No record other than being a pensioner in 1840, but a Samuel Candey (possibly the same man) was in Capt. Jabez Thompson's 3d company of Gen. Wooster's First Regiment at the Siege of Boston, as a Corporal, enlisting May 18, 1775 and discharged Dec. 20th in the same year.

4. and 5, Phineas and Timothy Johnson:

Phineas Johnson is recorded in Capt. Hicock's company, at New York in 1776, arriving in Camp Aug, 16, 1776 and discharged Sep 9, 1776. Timothy is listed in Capt. Rogers company from Cornwall in Col. Gay's Second Battalion, Wadsworth's Brigade 1776. They also are recorded as enlisting again from Milford in

Capt. Charles Pond's Company of the Sixth Regiment, "Connecticut Line" May 25, 1777, enlisting for the duration of the war. They are said to have served under Gen. Anthony Wayne, in his assault on Ticonderoga. This is an obvious error, as Wayne was not at Ticonderoga. They however, were with Wayne at the storming of Stony Point, on the Hudson River, July 15, 1779 in the 6th Regiment. They served also in the 4th Regiment, "Connecticut Line", being paid from Jan. 1, 1781 to Dec. 31, 1781. Phineas was made a Corporal Apr. 20, 1781. They are also listed as being in "Capt. Barber's Light Infantry Company of the 4th Connecticut Regiment under the command of the Marquis de la Fayette at the Southward 1781" as privates.

6. Job Candee:

Job Candee served in Capt. Bradley's Company of Matrosses (Artillery) raised for the defence of New Haven and was stationed partly in the town and partly at East Haven and West Haven at the time of Tryon's Invasion. Enlisted Feb. 9, 1779, discharged Feb. 8, 1780. He was also in Capt. Bradley's Company of Artillery Guards, in the Connecticut Militia, enlisting Apr. 3, 1780 and discharged Jan. 1, 1781. Then he was in Col. Canfield's Militia Regiment at West Point, Sept. 1781. He is listed in 1832 as a pensioner from the New Haven County.

7. Uri Scott:

He is included in the list of pensioners from Oxford in 1840, but no other record is given in the "Record of Connecticut Men in the Revolution".

8. David Peck:

He was in the Ninth Regiment of Militia at New York 1776 in Capt. Green's Company, marching Aug. 8th and discharged Sep. 20th also, in Capt. Green's company Nov. 1, 1776 to Jan. 11, 1777 at the Westchester border. He was in Col. Manning's company of the Second Regiment, "Connecticut Line", formation 1777-1781. He enlisted Apr. 14, 1778 for 3 years, just after the winter at Valley Forge, was present at the battle of Monmouth etc. Discharged Apr 14, 1780. Again he is listed in Capt. Bulkley's company of the Third Regiment "Connecticut Line", Formation of 1781-1783, and paid from Jan 1, 1781 to Dec. 31. 1781. He is recorded in the 1818 list of Connecticut Pensioners residing in New York.

9. Jeremiah M. Kelley:

In the list of pensioners residing in New Haven County in 1832, his name is given as Jeremiah M. Kelee. No other record.

10. Isaac Chatfield:

He is listed in Capt. Pendleton's Company in Col. Jeduthan

Baldwin's Regiment of Artificers. The men were largely carpenters, builders, tentmakers, tailors etc. He enlisted Oct. 1, 1777 and was discharged March 20, 1780. The regiment was at Brandywine, Germantown, Monmouth and other fields. He is listed in the 1818 pensioners.

One of the veterans of the Revolutionary War who is buried in the South Burying Grounds (Hillside Cemetery) is Elijah Harger, but he was not living in Oxford at the time of his enlistment June 1, 1780, but in Hartland, Connecticut. He applied for a pension July 25, 1832, his residence then being in Oxford. An added interest is that he was on guard when Maj. Andre was captured. He was in service but six months, as a private, and his application for a pension makes no mention of any battles in which he was engaged.

By 1781, the whole town of Derby seems to have been solidly behind the American cause, for on Jan. 15th of that year, it was "voted that the town will classify the inhabitants into forty-one classes to procure clothing for the soldiers, and Eliphalet Hotchkiss is appointed to classify accordingly. It is probable that each class was required to furnish the material and make the clothes; or if the cloth was furnished by the general Committee, still they must have appointed certain persons to the spinning and weaving of the same before they could furnish it to the makers of the clothes, as there were no manufacturers then to take contracts, all such work being done in the homes. The whole town of Derby became a manufacturing shop with twelve districts, each with its regularly appointed overseer, and the general overseer of all these different portions of the town was Deacon Eliphat Hotchkiss, the master house builder of the town."

In March, 1782, some who had been called on for service in the Army were released on payment of fifty pounds and the required number of soldiers for one year was obtained by the offer of bounties, and a tax of two pence on the pound was laid to pay these bounties. Those who could best leave home had freely volunteered early in the contest, and now those who remained, as freely contributed of their scanty means to fill the quota needed. Abraham Beecher was appointed collector in Oxford society and Ebenezer Riggs was associated with him as enlisting committee.

While the English, under Cornwallis, surrendered October 19th, 1781 and the active war was over, the final treaty of peace was not signed until Sep. 3, 1783.

CHAPTER 10

THE INCORPORATION OF OXFORD

About 1789, (the year George Washington was made President), the people of Oxford began to favor the incorporation of Oxford parish as a town, separate from Derby. In that year, at a town meeting held December 28, 1789: Doctor Edward Carrington and Mr. Shadrac Osborn were appointed a committee to take into consideration all the circumstances respecting Oxford being made into a town. On Feb. 4, 1793, a committee (who had been appointed to draw up an agreement and fix the boundaries of the proposed new town) reported to a Derby town meeting as follows:

(The following is a copy of a report relative to the incorporation of the town of Oxford accepted in a town meeting held Feb. 4th, 1793. Pages 203-204, Derby Records.)

“To the inhabitants of the town of Derby to be assembled in a meeting of sd town at the town house in sd Derby, on Monday, the 4th day of Feby instant-we the subscribers, comtte appointed at a meeting of sd town on Monday the 7th day of Jany last, to go out and view the circumstances and situation of sd town respecting a division thereof, and to ascertain certain boundaries and lines for sd division, and also to take into consideration the expense or burden of said town and all matters relating to sd division and to report our opinion thereon, beg leave to report; - That we have attended to sd business and mutually agreed on the following boundaries and lines of a division of sd town, viz.-beginning fifty rods above the mouth of Eight-Mile Brook by Ousatonic River, from thence running north easterly to the bend in Five Mile Brook at the foot of the hill, from thence running by sd Brook to the bridge over sd Brook in Woodbury old road, from thence to the southeast corner of Timothy Johnson’s-formerly Abner Johnson’s-dwelling house, from thence a due east course to the Little River, from thence by said River to the mouth where it empties into Naugatuck River, from thence crossing sd Naugatuck River to the eastern shore, from thence running up by said river on the east side of sd River to the mouth of the brook at the lower end of old Rimmon Plain, from thence to the end of the hill on the northeasterly side of sd brook at the lower end of sd Plain called Pessemires Hill, from thence on the ridge of sd Rock to the upper end of sd brook, from thence a due east course

to the Woodbridge line. Also agreed that all land on either side of sd line where lands are divided by sd lines shall be put into the list in either of the towns where the owner thereof resides so long as the present owners shall possess the same.

And it is further agreed that Oxford or the new proposed town shall support one half of the Falls Bridge, so long as the present bridge shall stand; and when this present bridge will not answer to repair and it is necessary that a new bridge to be built; then Oxford or the sd new town shall at their own expense, build a good and sufficient new bridge where sd bridge now stands, to the acceptance of sd town of Derby. And it is further agreed that any persons living near said lines on either side where the line divided their land shall have their choice in which town they will belong, provided they make their choice in one year after sd division, and shall belong where they enter their List the first year after sd division. And it is further agreed that when a division of sd town shall be completed, the poor of sd town of Derby shall be divided to each town, and all other burdens which may arise in consequence of any existing circumstances, shall be equally borne by each of said towns if divided according to the List of each town. All of which is submitted by your most humble servants.

Sam' Hull

Daniel Holbrook

Thomas Clark

= Comtte

Caleb Candee

Josiah Strong

Leman Strong

Dated, Derby, Febr 4th, A.D., 1793"

The State Assembly, however, did not confirm this agreement and Derby, while ostensibly agreeing to the separation, apparently would not take the necessary action and the matter dragged on, for several years.

In a town meeting held Sep. 21, 1795, it was voted that to facilitate the division of the town, Derby would divide its representation with Oxford, if set off, each to have one representative.

In April 1798, John Riggs, Caleb Candee and Charles Bunnell on the part of the parish of Oxford, and James Lewis, David Hitchcock and Canfield Gillett on the part of "the old town", as a joint committee, reported in addition to previous arrangements that Oxford should pay £170 to the old town in three annual installments, as a condition of the division of the town.

Finally, in October of 1798, the Oxford people resorted to a stratagem to bring about the desired result. In that year, the Derby Town Meeting was set for a day in October, beginning at 9 A.M.. This was the regular hour for Town Meetings, but it had become customary not

to actually start proceedings until one o'clock in the afternoon. Some bright mind in Oxford recognized that this gave the Oxford people a chance to force the Derby people into action, before the inhabitants of Derby proper arrived.

To this end, practically all of the voters residing in Oxford gathered together at Oxford Center early in the morning prepared for a long walk (some eight miles) to Derby. They took with them the Rev. David Bronson, the Congregational minister of Oxford. ("The History of the Town of Derby" says it was the Rev. Wm. Bronson, but this seems an error.) They reached the meeting place in Derby promptly at nine o'clock and opened the meeting immediately, and before the Derby voters could be assembled, the meeting had voted that the town meetings should be held one half the time at Oxford. As a result, Derby withdrew its objection to the separation and the Assembly made the grant of incorporation, Oct. 20, 1798, with the following action:

(a) "At a General Assembly of the State of Connecticut holden at New haven on the 2 thursday of Oct. 1798. (Oct 20)

Upon the petition of the inhabitants of the parish of Oxford & the rest of the inhabitants of Derby in the county of New haven, showing to this assembly, that sd town is 13 miles in length & the town house stands about 2 miles from the south east corner of Sd town; and that the inhabitants living in the north part & within the limits described in sd petition are conveniently situated for a town; and that sd town of Derby have agreed to divide representation &c; Praying that those who live within the limits described in sd petition may be incorporated into a town as pr memorial on file.

It appearing in a full hearing & enquiry that the facts in sd petition are truly stated & that sd town of Derby have agreed to divide representation.

Resolved by this assembly that the inhabitants living within the following limits be & they are hereby incorporated into a separate & distinct town by the name of Oxford to wit- beginning at the mouth of Kettletown brook, thence running southerly on Ousatonack river to a heap of stones a little north of the late dwelling house of Noah Tomlinson now deceased thence running north easterly to the bend in five mile brook at the foot of the hill; from thence running by sd brook to the bridge over sd brook in Woodbury old road; from thence to the south east corner of the lat (sic) dwelling house of Timothy Johnson now decd, from thence a due east course to Naugatuck River; from thence crossing sd river to the eastern shore; from thence running up sd river on the east side thereof to the mouth of the brook at the lower end of old Rimmon plain; from thence to the end of the hill on the northerly side of

(a) Oxford Town Meeting Book No 1 P 1.

said brook at the lower end of Rock Rimmon; from thence on the ridge of sd rock to the upper end of said rock; from thence a due east course to Woodbridge line; from thence on the dividing line between Woodbridge & Derby till it meets Waterbury line; thence on the dividing line between Waterbury & Derby or Oxford till it meets Southbury; thence on the dividing line between Southbury & Derby or Oxford till it meets the first mentioned bounds; and the afore said boundaries & limits are hereby fixed declared and established to be the boundaries & limits of sd town of Oxford and the same is hereby constituted a town by the aforesd corporate name and shall have retain & enjoy all the privileges & immunities belonging & incident to any other town in this state; except only that sd town of Oxford shall at no time choose & return more than one representative to the general assembly; - And representation is hereby divided between sd towns of Derby & Oxford & sd town of Derby & sd town of Oxford, shall hereafter have liberty to choose & return each one but one representative to the General Assembly of this state.

And the present towns poor & other debts burthens & debts of sd town shall be apportioned to sd Derby & Oxford according to the agreement entered into by a committee appointed on the part of sd Derby & on the part of sd Oxford dated the 9th & 23d of April 1798 & accepted by sd town of Derby-----
(Then follows details of tax matters)

And the first meeting of sd town of Oxford shall be held at the meeting house in Oxford on the third tuesday of November 1798 for the purpose of appointing town officers which meeting shall be warned by a warrant signed by Thomas Clarke Esqr of sd Oxford a Justice of the peace for sd county or in case of his decease by John Riggs Esqr of sd Oxford a Justice of the peace for sd County- and sd warrant shall be posted on the public sign post in sd Oxford at least five days before sd meeting; and sd John Riggs Esq shall be moderator of sd meeting or on case of his decease or absence Thomas Clarke Esq. and sd town shall then & there proceed to appoint a town clerk & other town officers for sd town who shall continue in office until the annual town meeting for the year 1799.

And it is further resolved that sd town of Oxford be and the same is hereby annexed the county of Newhaven & shall be & remain within & part thereof."

"a true copy of record examined
by Samuel Wyllys Secretary

Hosea Dutton, Register

Compared with the Secretary's
copy and found true."

FIRST MEETING OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD

At a meeting of the inhabitants of the town of Oxford pursuant to the order of the honble Genrl Assembly on the 3d tuesday of November A.D. 1798 at the meeting hous of sd town

John Riggs Esqr moderator
Mr. Ebenezer Wooster was chosen Town Clerk
John Riggs Esqr Town Treasurer
Capt Ebenezer Riggs, John Riggs Esqr Messrs
David Tomlinson Charle Bunnell & Caleb Cande Selectmen
Messrs Nathaniel Pangman, Nathan Buckingham Jr. & Charles Bunnell
were chosen Constables ----- and sworn.
Mr. Charles Bunnell appointed collector of the state tax.
Messrs Gideon Cande, Abijah Chatfield & Elihu Bates were chosen
Grand Jurors & sworn.
Messrs John Bunnell, Eleazer Twichel, Benjn Loveland & Chester
Smith were chosen tithing men & sworn
Messrs John Towner & Caleb Cande were chosen fence viewers
Messrs Danl Cande Justus Cande Abel Wheeler and Silas Hawkins
were chosen listers & sworn, likewise Asahel Hyde and Philo Holbrook.

Messrs Asahel Hyde	}	Sworn	Danel Cande	}	Sworn
Benj Loveland			David Smith Jr.		
Elijah Harger			Naboth Osborn		
Moses Cande			Job Cande		
Joel Buckingham			Hose Dutton		
John Hawkins			Wm Church		
Abel Waters			John Fairchild		
Josiah Washband Jr.	Sworn		Philo Bucher		Sworn
Samel Bartis			Isaac Riggs		
			Nathanel Johnson		Sworn

and Joseph Lines sworn were chosen surveyors of highways.
Mr. Sherman Hatch chosen leather sealer & sworn.
Noted that the meeting be adjourned to Jan. 7th 1799 at the meeting house.

Attest, Ebenr Wooster, town clerk.

By 1800 the population of Oxford totaled 1410 persons, and the grand list for 1795 included 232 persons, so that the average family contained about 6 persons. The men having holdings of over 100 Lbs. at that time were:

Thomas Osborn	£ 133 9s 9d	John Wooster & Son	£133 5s 6d
Ebenezer Wooster	£ 119 5s	Thomas Clark	£ 116
David Tomlinson	£ 114 12s	Ebenezer Johnson, Jr.	£ 111 18s 9d
John Riggs	£ 197 6s	Isaac Nichols	£ 104 15s

At this time, notification, (or warnings as they were called) of town meetings were made by affixing the notice to “The oak tree by the meeting house; the white oak tree on Chestnut Hill at the corner of Squire Clarke’s; the mill at Quaker’s Farm; and the corner of the garden by Charles Johnson”.) In 1800 the town meeting voted to change the place in Quaker’s Farm, from the mill to Squire Tomlinson’s Shop. This apparently did not take place for sometime, for in 1844 the town voted to remove it from the mill to a place near the church in Quaker Farms.

The first men to take the oath as Freemen after the incorporation of the town did so April 8, 1799, were:

Joel Buckingham, Chester Smith, Ebenezer Twichell, Roger Perkins, Joel Perry, Anson Smith, Jared Beardsley, John Bunnell, Caleb Tomlinson, John D. Wooster, Moses Sanford, Truman Bunnell, Cyrus Candee, John Fairchild, Elijah Treatt, and David Bunnell.

The oath was administered by Thomas Clarke, Esqr

The first men selected to represent the new town in the General Assembly were:

Thomas Clark, Esqr	at Town Meeting	April 8, 1799
John Riggs, Esqr	" "	Sep. 16, 1799
Capt. Ebenezer Riggs	" "	Apr. 7, 1800

The second town clerk, Hosea Dutton was chosen Apr. 7, 1800, and the first “perambulation”, since incorporation, was made between Oxford and Southbury.

CHAPTER 11

THE TOWN GREENS

At the present time (1958) there are two Town Greens, the one on the eastern side of the Southbury Road (Route 67) being known as the "Upper Green", and the one on the western side of Route 67 being called the "Lower Green".

The Upper Green starts at Academy St. and runs south in front of the houses which face on the Green, to Lounsbury Road. The Lower Green starts at Governor's Hill Road and runs south between Route 67 and Little River to the site of St. Peter's Church (on the west side of Route 67)

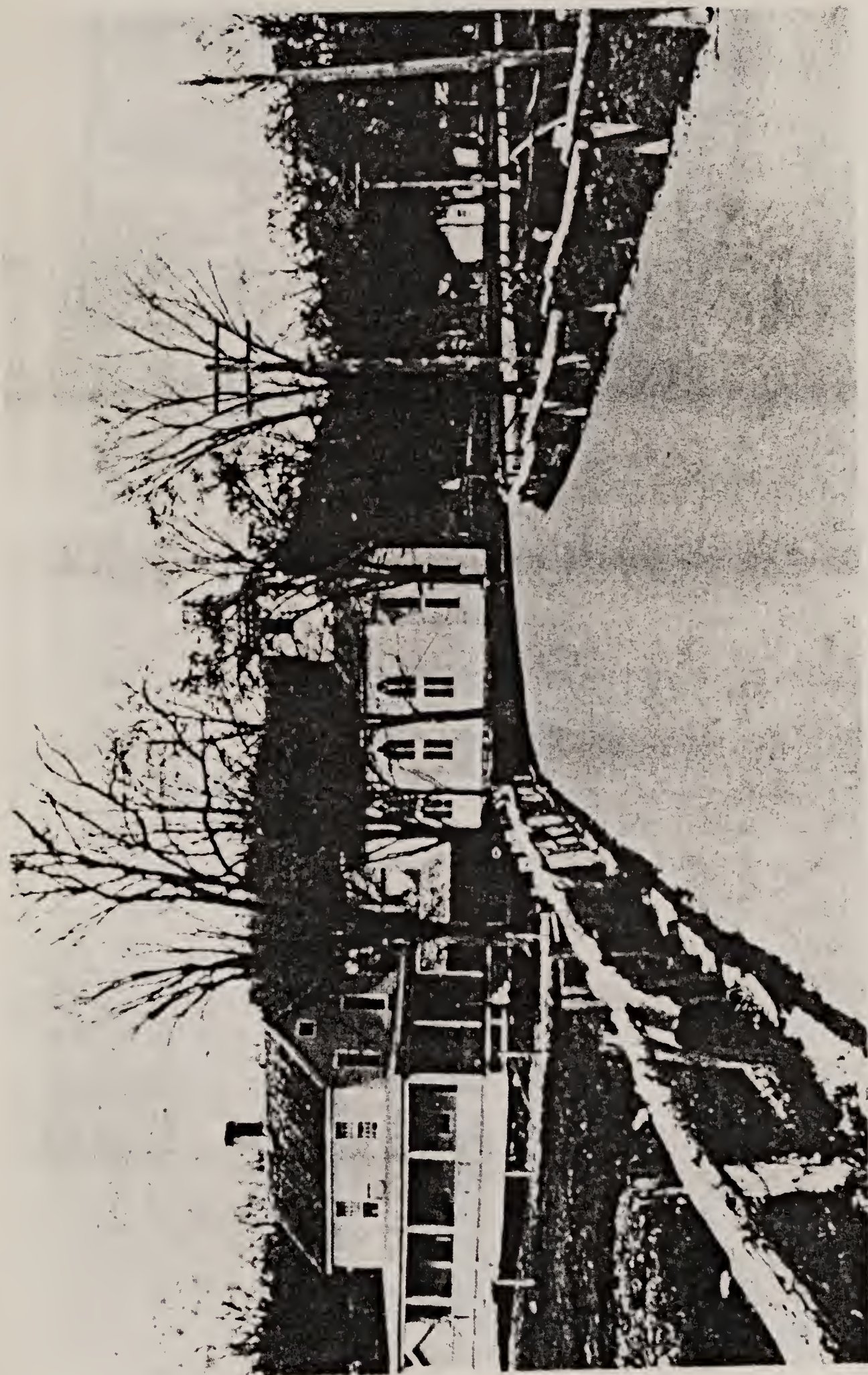
But originally the two Greens were not separated by the Southbury Road. The late Mr. R. I. Sanford is said to have stated that the Oxford-Southbury Turnpike did not follow the course of the present Route 67 through Oxford Center, but somewhere near Hogs Back it turned west and circled around the Center to Dr. Dutton's house on what is now known as Lounsbury Road; thence east, downhill along Lounsbury Road to the retaining wall in front of the houses on the east side of the green. Then north along the wall to Academy St., then east on the latter to Riggs St., then south on Riggs St. - a circuitous route which will be described more fully under "Turnpikes", but one which left the two Greens undivided.

In Judge Wilcoxson's 1876 Centennial address, he says "The public green of the central part is made up of what is called "Meeting House acre land" given by a Mr. Chatfield for a site for a meeting house, and of land thrown out by proprietors along down on the easterly side till it ends upon the turnpike road. This constitutes what is called the Upper Green."

This Upper Green apparently dates back to the very early years of Oxford, but its exact date is not on record.

Of the "Lower Green", Judge Wilcoxson gives the following account, -

"The lower Green is proprietors' land and laid by the proprietors' committee for a public common and a military parade ground. Esq. Chas Bunnell told me what I am about to state. The committee came along as was expected, on their way above to lay out land. As they were passing, he (Bunnell) spoke with them of the land now constituting the Green and requested them to lay out for public use. They replied that they would consider the matter. As



Oxford Center from the South, about 1900.



The Upper Green, Looking South at Academy Road, About 1900.



The Upper Green in 1900, Looking North from the South end.



The Little River and the Lower Green, Looking North towards the Bridge on Governor's Hill Rd., about 1900.



Oxford Center and the Greens, about 1900.

they returned he was stationed to hear their reply to his request. They said they so laid out the land as he requested."

"The land was in a forbidding state, being a thickly grown bramble. The people turned out under the lead of a committee, to wit; Capt. John Davis, Lieut. Samuel Andrew Buckingham, and Ensign Ebenezer Fairchild. I was informed by Lieut. (afterwards Capt.) Buckingham that the whole public common, both upper and lower was laid out and improved under the lead of the same committee".

Judge Wilcoxson unfortunately does not give the date when Chas. Bunnell made his suggestion to the committee about the Lower Green. Oxford was incorporated as a Town in 1798, presumably the Upper Green was laid out about that time, or even before.

Ebenezer Fairchild died in 1804, so the Lower Green must have been laid out by the committee before that year, and it seems likely that it was done in 1798, the year of incorporation.

Judge Wilcoxson seems to intimate, (though he does not say so) that Squire Chas. Bunnell gave the land for the Lower Green.

CHAPTER 12

ROADS AND TURNPIKES

ROADS

For the settlers to take up their abode in Oxford, it is obvious that some means of communication must have been set up between them and their old home in Derby, starting out with foot trails, then bridle paths, developing later to cart tracks and finally to roads or "highways".

"There were three principal ways to go from Derby to Waterbury in those old times. One way was on the east side of the Naugatuck River, on Skokorat, then up over Beacon Hill to Salem etc.

"A second way was along the banks of the Naugatuck River, crossing the stream sixteen times. A third way was over Great Hill, Rocku's Hill (Rockhouse Hill), Quaker Farms etc. The latter, the Rock House Hill and Five Mile Hill-Quaker Farms Road was first known as "the Woodbury Path" and was laid out as early as Feb. 28, 1676, when it is recorded that "at a meeting of the Committee appointed by the General Court May 13, 1675 to state a place for a ferry (across the Housatonic River at Derby) and a highway from it to Woodbury, they decided to have the highway run from the ferry "upwards towards Woodbury, to the upper end of the old field and then up to the hollow at the upper end of that field to the highway that is now used towards Woodbury."

Other records indicate that the highway referred to was that over Great Hill, Rockhouse Hill, and Five Mile Hill, and through Quaker Farms.

It apparently was not until 1783 that the road along the eastern shore of the Housatonic River was built, when in that year Capt. Zachariah Hawkins was appointed to oversee and make a new highway there from Woodbury to Derby. The part of this highway north of Stevenson Dam was flooded by the building of that dam and the formation of Lake Zoar and has not yet been replaced.

An early map of Connecticut (that made by the famous engraver A. Doolittle of New Haven), published in 1792 shows the road on the east side of the Naugatuck River over Skokorat to which we have just referred, and also Capt. Hawkins road along the Housatonic River.

It shows also a road following the course of the Little River, from about Seymour to a point just south of Oxford Center where it diverges east from Little River and passes east of the Center. The scale of the map is so small that it is difficult to determine the exact location of this road, but, when plotted on a modern road map, it seems either to follow Chestnut Tree Hill Road, (including the southern portion now known as Wire Hill Road), or possibly Rimmon Hill Road from Seymour.

Strangely enough, the Doolittle map does not show the Rock House Hill, Five Mile Hill, Quaker Farms Road.

With the production of more farm products than the settler's own families could consume, there came a demand for better roads from the interior to the various seaports where these products could be loaded aboard ships bound for New York, Boston, and other coastal ports, and also for the West Indies.

The first roads were mere swaths, cut through the forest, and while fairly wide, no attempt was made to remove tree stumps or boulders, the road, so-called, being pretty much like the modern "right-of-way" of an Electric Company for its power lines.

They were not smooth enough for a horse to travel at any pace faster than a walk, and even at that rate there was always danger of his breaking his leg in a pot hole. The only vehicle that could use it was a two-wheeled slow paced ox-cart.

So the demand increased for better, smoother roads, but very much like our present-day people, the people of 1795 objected to paying taxes to finance the cost of such roads, which involved the removal of tree stumps and boulders and a bed of broken stone, topped with gravel. So they turned to the device of the formation of private companies who would build, or improve the roads with their own funds and get their pay for so doing by levying tolls on the users of the roads at rates authorized by the State. Such toll roads had been in use for many years in England, and were known as "turnpike roads", because the toll-gate consisted of four slender poles about ten feet long sharpened at their outer ends and turning, like a gate, around a center post. These long poles were termed "pikes", probably after the old weapon of defense consisting of such a pole tipped with a steel point. A row of "pike men" formed the famous means of defense against cavalry charges, used by Cromwell's "Ironsides". And in fact, steel tipped pike poles were in common use in early New England for erecting frames of houses and churches. And in our own time, they continued to be used for erecting telephone and power-line poles until quite recently.

All the early deeds speak of these toll roads as "turnpike roads", and not just "turnpikes" or "pikes", but popularly the road itself soon became known by the shortened form.

Speaking of the improvement of the roads which occurred towards

the end of the 18th century, Albert Gallatin, at that time Secretary of the Treasury, reported in 1808 that "a great number of artificial roads have been completed in the eastern and middle States. The labor bestowed on the least expensive species consists in shortening the distance, diminishing the ascent of hills, removing rocks, leveling, raising and giving a proper shape to the bed of the roads, draining them by ditches, and erecting bridges over the intervening streams."

The people of Oxford, Southbury, and Derby turned early to the building of a turnpike road connecting these places, forming in 1795 the "Oxford Turnpike Company." This was the first turnpike corporation formed in Connecticut, although the turnpike era in New England had begun in 1792 when the first toll road was established between New London and Norwich (The Mohegan Road), but this undertaking was under the charge of Commissioners, and not of an incorporated company.

The building of a turnpike by a corporation was not entirely popular, as "the companies assumed that they were not bound to build anything but a road, and that the towns through which the turnpikes were projected were obliged to purchase the land needed for a new road, or for alterations to the old, and to build all necessary bridges."

The act of the General Assembly is dated May 2, 1795, and reads as follows:

"At a General Assembly of the State of Connecticut holden at Hartford on the second Thursday of May 1795. Upon the Petition of John Bulford and his associates showing this assembly that there is necessity of immediately repairing the great road leading from Southbury to Derby and New Haven through the parish of Oxford, praying for liberty to erect a turnpike on said roads and to collect a toll from Travellers to be applied to it for the keeping sd road in repair and to reimburse those who shall repair sd road the sums by them advanced with an interest thereon as per Petition on file,-

"Resolved by this Assembly that the sd John Bulford and his associates ----- are hereby constituted by the name of Oxford Turnpike Co. And be it further resolved that as soon as said society shall have fully repaired sd road from the homelately owned by Ebenezer Brownson in Southbury to John Wooster's in Derby or expended thereon in repairs the sum of £700 Lawful money and obtained a certificate thereof from the county court of New Haven County, the sd proprietors shall be and they are hereby authorized to erect and establish a Turnpike on sd road in the most convenient place, at which Turnpike the proprietors shall be and they are hereby authorized to collect the following tolls, viz

	<u>cents.</u>
Every travelling or pleasure four wheeled and draft horses -----	25
*Chase (sic) chair or sulkey -----	12 1/2
Loaded cart or loaded waggon -----	12 1/2
Empty Do Empty Do-----	6 1/4
Empty cart -----	6 1/4
Single Horse cart -----	6 1/4
Horses, cattle and mules in droves -----	3
Pleasure Travelling sleighs -----	6 1/4
Loaded Do -----	6 1/4
Empty Do -----	4
Loaded sleds -----	8
Empty Do -----	6 1/4
Man and Horse-----	4
Sheep and hogs-----	1 1/2

Provided nevertheless that Persons travelling on the Lord's day and other public days to attend Publick worship, persons travelling to attend Town and Society Meetings, Persons attending Funerals and Farmers in the neighborhood of sd Turnpike passing through the same to attend their farming business shall not be liable to the payment of said Toll----- And whenever or as soon as the aforesaid tolls shall reimburse to the proprietors----- the sums by them advanced together with interest at Twelve Pr Centum per annum, then the said road shall be and remin discharged from sd tolls."

The Oxford Turnpike seems to have followed generally the main course of the present Route 67 to a point somewhere near Hogs Back Road in Oxford. Here it made a curious detour west around the Town Greens, turning abruptly west to a road near the old Town Poor Farm. It then turned south on this road to Lounsbury (formerly Dutton) Road, then east on Lounsbury Road to and across Route 67 to the east side of the Town Green. At this point the road turned north, skirting the east edge of the Green, to Academy Road, then east on the latter to Back St. (the present Riggs St) and south on Back St. to Route 67. There was a little inn on the west side of Back St., the foundations of which are still discernible, at which it is said a toll-gate was located. At some later date, the toll-gate was moved to Route 67 just south of the Center, its position being shown on the 1868 map of Oxford.

This detour of course gave the effect of preserving the Town Green as one undivided tract, instead of being split as at present by Route 67.

South of Oxford the Turnpike seems to have followed Route 67 to some point where it turned northeast to Pines Bridge and united with

*Meaning thereby, a chaise

the Naugatuck and New Haven Turnpike on Beacon Brook. At what exact point it turned east from the Little River (Route 67) is uncertain. But some light is thrown on the matter by the action of the town of Derby when the turnpike from New Haven to Derby Landing was completed. Derby wished to have this turnpike extended to Oxford, so that traffic would flow down to Derby from Oxford and by the new Derby Pike to New Haven instead of turning east, north of Chusetown (Seymour). The town of Derby failed, however, to obtain the cooperation of Oxford and December 1804, Derby decided to proceed alone and voted "to lay out a road from Shrub Oak, so-called, to Derby Narrows." The report of the selectmen, in laying out this road was accepted Apr. 18, 1805 and a vote passed to make the road".

This would indicate that the Oxford Turnpike turned off Route 67 at "Shrub Oak". The latter was the name given at an early date to that part of Seymour lying west of the Naugatuck River at the Falls. Its center was at the crossing of Church and West Streets, and Church St. was part of the old Rimmon Hill Road. From the foregoing, it would seem quite probable that the Oxford turnpike turned east from Route 67 at and over Rimmon Hill Road in the outskirts of "Chusetown" instead of at Chestnut Tree Hill Road.

OTHER TURNPIKES IN OXFORD

The "Pines Bridge Turnpike Co." was incorporated in 1824 and operated from Waterbury more or less along Chestnut Tree Hill Road as far as the old "Water Company's Road", then south on the latter to Pine's Bridge Road where it joined the Oxford Turnpike on its way to the Naugatuck-New Haven Turnpike. It ceased operation in 1836.

The "Ousatonic Turnpike Co." was incorporated in 1798, and ran along the eastern bank of the Housatonic River from New Milford through Oxford at the Town's western line to Derby. This may possibly be the road that Oxford voted on Apr. 3, 1800 appointing "Messrs Caleb Candee, Charles Bunnell and Isaac Nichols a committee to meet the committee appointed by the County Court upon the petition of Elihu Sanford and others for a turnpike road". This, however, is uncertain.

In October, 1813, the portion between Southbury and New Milford was discontinued as a turnpike. Twenty-one years later, namely in May 1834, the northerly half of the Ousatonic Company's road was given to a new corporation known as the "River Turnpike Company", the division being made at Zoar Bridge in Oxford. But by 1842, the road had gotten into bad repair and the charters of both the River Company and the Ousatonic Company were repealed and the road given to the public.

Instead of charging tolls, another way of financing the construction of highways was by lottery, such a scheme having been resorted to in

1782, in connection with the road from Derby to Woodbury, north along the Housatonic River (Route 34) to Squantuck, then east to Rock House Hill (Route 188). The following account of it is given by W. C. Sharpe in his "History of Seymour".

"A lottery was established in 1782 by authority of the town of Derby to defray the expense of a highway from Derby to Woodbury, by the Housatonic river and Wesquantuck or Rock House Hill Purchase, the cost not to exceed 500 pounds. Capt. Thomas Clark and Daniel Holbrook were to petition the General Assembly for its consent and approval. John Humphrey and Lieut. Riggs were appointed to lay out the road."

As the road up Rock House Hill through Quaker Farms was much older, it seems fair to assume that the cost of 500 pounds was to cover only the road from Derby to the junction of Squantuck Road and Rock House Hill Road at the present traffic circle.

The first recorded action by the town for care and improvement of its roads, appears to be the following:

On Oct. 5, 1801 it was voted to divide the township into 3 districts for the purpose of repairing the highways, the first to contain all the inhabitants east of the residents on Chestnut Hill road; the 2d from thence to a line betwixt Lyman Nichols and Roger Perkins and to run eastward of Danl Mallory's; the 3d to contain all westward of said line.

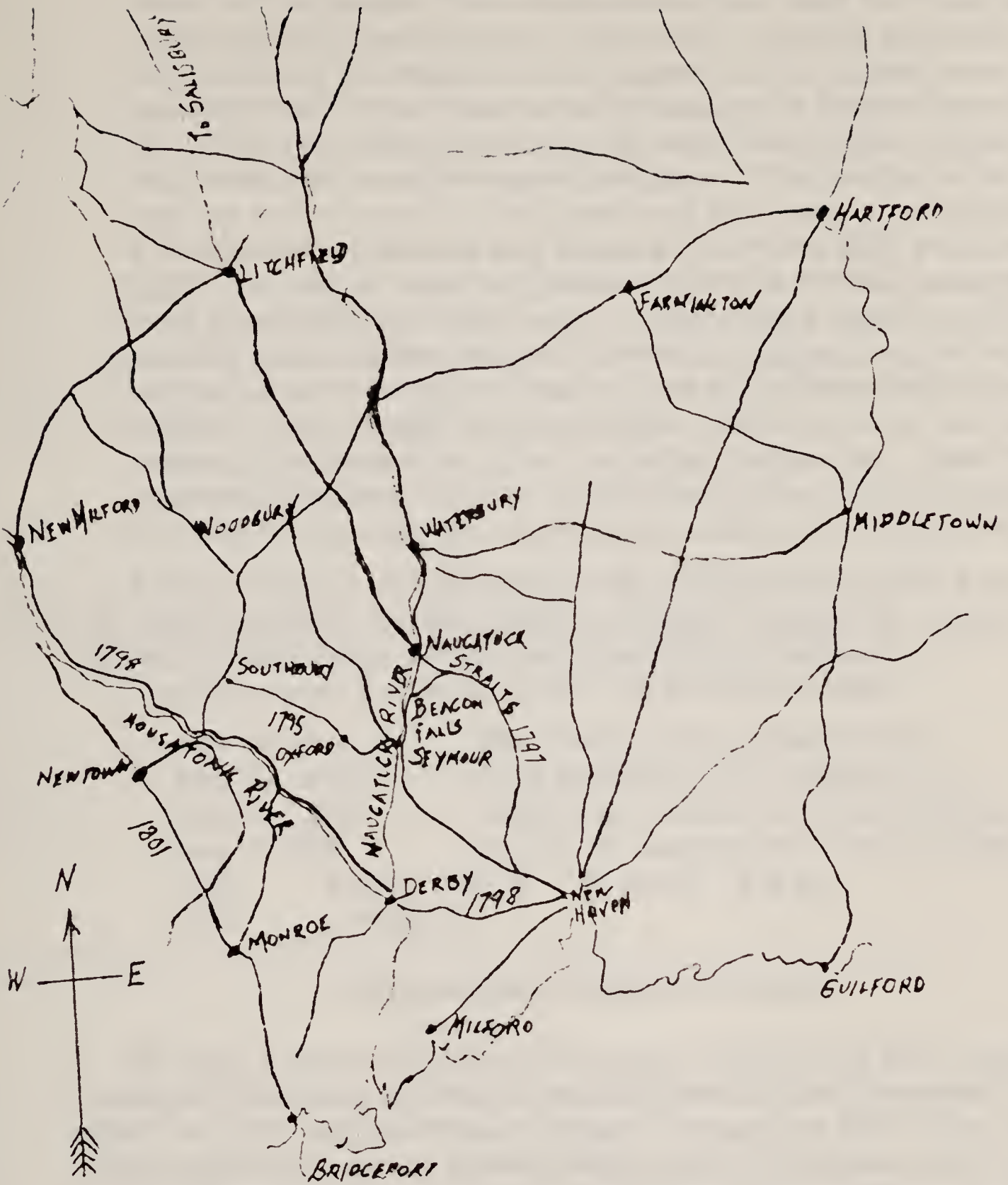
It was also voted that a tax of one cent on a dollar be laid payable in work at 50 cents per day and for three-cattle team 50 cts. Further action on roads was taken by the town of Oxford, Sep 7, 1834 when it voted that the several collectors of Highway Tax to be called upon to collect-----to lay a tax of one cent on the dollar-----to be expended on the several roads or public highways in the town.

The first recorded action on Hogs Back Road was taken May 4, 1853 when Town Meeting voted that the Selectmen examine and make such appropriation as they may deem proper on the road running from the Turnpike to Quaker Farms by the house of David J. McEwen.

Plank Roads

The difficulty in keeping the surface of the gravel roads of the turnpikes, led later in some instances to the use of planks as a surface. One of these was the Oxford-Southbury pike, the "Woodbury and Seymour Plank Road Company" being incorporated in 1852.

"Plank roads were nearly all cases of single track, laid on the right side of the road as one faced the large town to which it led. Longitudinal trenches were dug in which sills consisting of three



Turnpikes in Vicinity of Oxford, Conn.

inch plank, four and eight inches wide were placed, and on them were laid the planks, three inches thick and eight feet long, at right angles to the direction of the road. The sills were set slightly below the surface of the ground and the planks were pounded down to rest upon them by means of a large wooden mallet. After the planks were laid, the earth was packed against their ends and soundly tamped into place. The portion of the highway not occupied by the plank road was usually maintained as a common dirt road and was known as the "turn off", because light loads had to leave the planks and follow it when passing a team proceeding the other way. In order that a wagon might regain the plank surface without its wheels sliding along the edges, the planks were staggered, that is, one half of them had their ends in a line straight with each other, while the other half were alternately advanced to a line six inches further out. Over the completed planking, a layer of sand was spread, which preserved the road by reducing the cutting by the calks of the horse shoes."

Among the first stockholders of the Woodbury-Seymour Plank Road Co. were Lewis B. Candee, Norman Parker, Charles B. Phelps, Reuben H. Hotchkiss, Lewis Judd, and William Gaylord.

The Company's accounts contain the following items:

Aug. 3, 1859	Paid Perry's bill, Planks 480
Aug. 31, 1859	Paid Benham's bill, Planks \$3.23
Aug. 31, 1878	Paid Benj. Nichols for Plank \$67.22
Jan. 1, 1879	Paid S. P. Sanford for Ties and Plank-----
1882	Plank 600 ft 2c per ft. \$12.00
1883	Plank 38

Discontinuance of the Toll Roads

We have seen that the first toll road in Oxford was the "Oxford Turnpike", starting in 1795. It was followed by the "Ousatonic Turnpike", in 1798, and the "Pine's Bridge Turnpike in 1824. The first to cease operation was the Pines Bridge pike, in 1836, and next to go was the Ousatonic pike in 1842. The Oxford pike was converted in 1852 into a plank road which discontinued as a toll road entirely "sometime between 1880 and 1887".

The only remaining toll road in this general district was the Derby-New Haven pike, which ceased operation in 1895.

State Highways

In the same year, 1895, the State Highway Department was organized,

"Under the act of 1897 the procedure was as follows:

The towns selected the highways to be improved, advertised for bids, let the contracts, and the work of the Department consisted chiefly of supervision.

The first recorded action of Town Meeting occurred Oct. 29, 1895 when it was voted "that we appropriate five hundred dollars from the town treasury for the improvements of the roads of said town as the selectmen and commissioners of the State district."

"In 1908, a Trunk Line System was laid out by the Commissioner, through routes being designated as Trunk Lines and their construction and maintenance were provided for by state appropriations. But those roads which served merely to connect Trunk Line Roads or provide communication between the various communities were called State Aid Roads.

Oxford's First Hard Surfaced Roads

The first hard surfaced road (black top) constructed by the Town of Oxford was Barry Road (originally known as "Old Mill Road") from Quaker Farms Road to the Old Mill at Eight Mile Brook. This occurred about 1933. It was followed by Park Road, Maple Tree Hill Road and Christian Street.

On October 2, 1933, the Oxford Town Meeting voted to make application to the State Highway Commissioners for an allotment of \$10,000, for "construction or improvements of roads or bridges in this town."

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING THE SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALL ROADS TO BE ACCEPTED AND MAINTAINED BY THE TOWN OF OXFORD

1. Before work is started on any road, plans or blueprints must be presented to the Board of Selectmen for approval.

2. All roads shall have an established right of way of at least 50' with a travel portion of a width of at least 20'. No roads shall have grades greater than 10% unless approved by the Board of Selectmen.

3. The traveled portion shall be constructed with a surface of good clean gravel to a depth of at least 12" when completed, upon a sub-base compacted until the same is brought to a hard firm condition.

6. All roads shall be properly drained and sufficient culverts and catch basins installed.

8. All slopes and areas adjacent to the pavement, to the full width of the right-of-way, shall be cleared of stones, stumps, brush and logs, and the same shall be left in a workmanlike manner. All trees in the right-of-way shall be removed, except as approved by the Selectmen. All over-hanging branches shall be trimmed to a 12' clearance above the finished surface of the road.

9. The owner shall furnish and erect street signs bearing the name of the streets as shown on the map. The signs shall be similar in quality and design, with metal posts, and shall be approved by the Selectmen.

11. Before any construction is begun, the developer must post a bond subject to the approval of the Selectmen as to sufficiency and amount to cover the cost of building the roads, drainage and appurtenances. When water mains are to be installed the same shall be installed prior to the application of the surface of the roadway.

12. In general, Connecticut State Highway Department Specifications for roads and bridges (Current Form #807) shall be construed to govern these specifications.

13. All work must be completed within two years from the date of beginning construction."

THIS ORDINANCE PASSED AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
OF OCTOBER 1, 1956.

CHAPTER 13

ZOAR BRIDGE, PINES BRIDGE, AND STEVENSON BRIDGE

ZOAR BRIDGE

Before the formation of Zoar Lake on the Housatonic River, by the construction of the Stevenson Dam in 1918-1920, there was a bridge across the Housatonic River about 1 1/2 miles above the present dam. It was known as Zoar Bridge. Zoar was a small community on the west side of the Housatonic River, named presumably after the Old Testament locality of that name. At the east end of the bridge was the locality then known as Punkups.

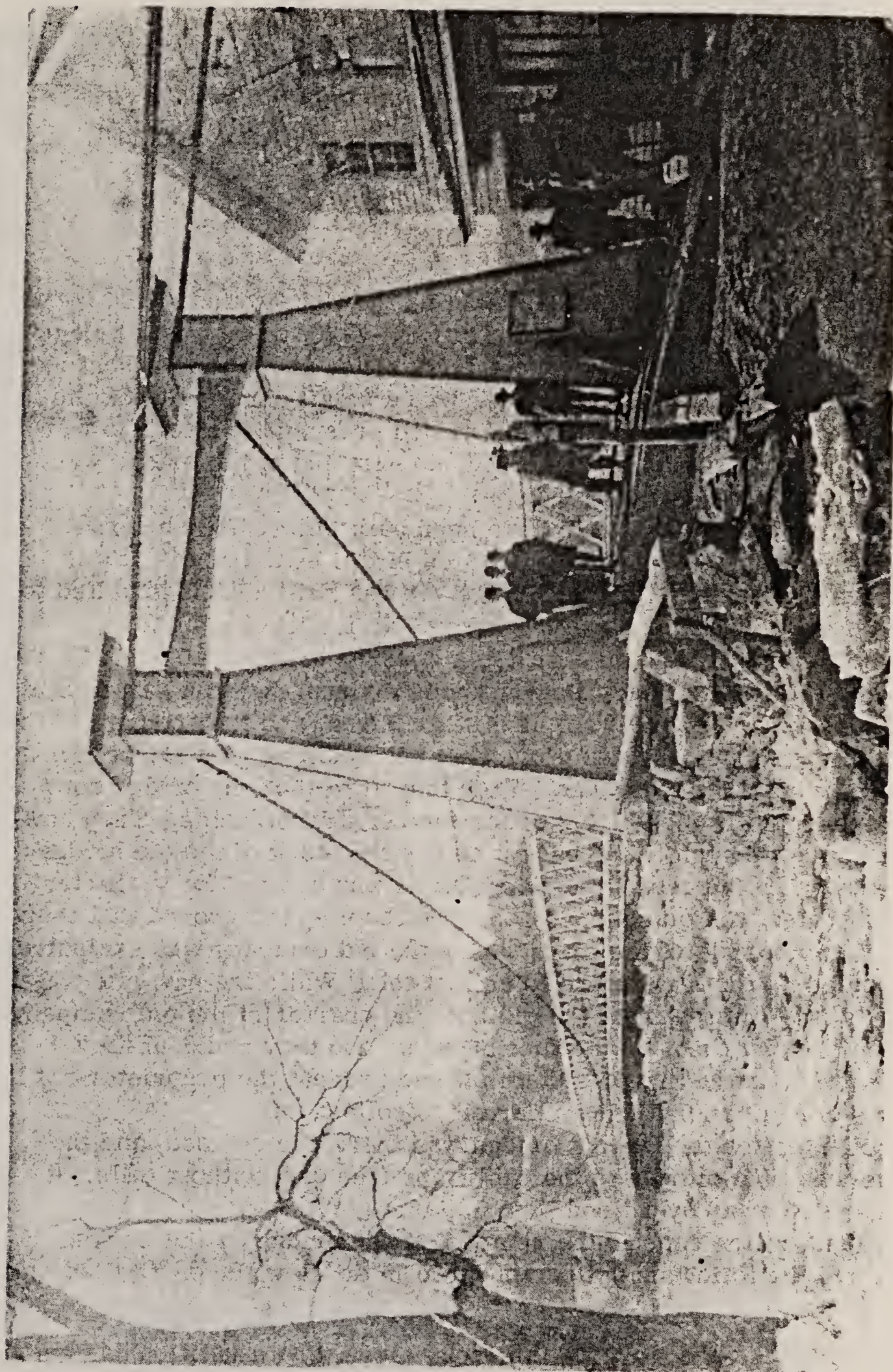
The first bridge is said to have been built before 1800 and the bridge company incorporated and rates of toll established. It was known as the Ezekiel Curtiss Bridge. It was built with logs bolted together for the sides, and was carried by an ice freshet in 1835.

In 1837, Elisha Hubbell built a big covered bridge. About 1840, two brothers, Webb and Beach Downs, from Monroe, owned a saw mill at Punkups and land on the west side of the river, and they conceived the idea of moving Zoar bridge down where it would be convenient for them to bring their logs over. They therefore took the bridge down and re-erected it about 1 1/8 miles further downstreams. They however, had not thought it necessary to buy the stock of the old bridge company, with the result that when the Downs applied for a charter and toll rates, the old company opposed them on the ground that they were within a mile of the place where the old company was exclusively authorized by the legislature to collect toll. While the new site was actually 1 1/8 miles from the old one, the charter of the old company did not restrict them to an exact location, and they could, if they chose, build further south and this would prevent the proprietors of the Down's bridge from getting a permit to collect toll.

A charter for the Down's bridge was therefore refused, and the bridge was thrown open to the public for free use, without tolls. It was carried away by a flood Nov. 13, 1853.

In 1840, at the time of the removal of the bridge by the Downs brothers, the following notice appeared in the New Haven "Palladium" of Jan 9th:

"Zoar Bridge - Notice is hereby given, that a petition has been brought to the General Assembly to be holden at New Haven in May next (1840) for an act of incorporation, authorizing the



Old Zoar Bridge, in an Ice Freshet. Old Post office and Store.



Old Zoar Bridge, Looking across the Housatonic from Oxford towards Zoar.

Petitioners, or such others as may be willing to associate, to build a bridge over the Ousatonic River, at or near the site of Zoar Bridge, lately taken down; with liberty to take such reasonable toll as may be established by the General Assembly. Dated at Monroe, the 28th day of February, 1840."

The new bridge was built immediately.

About 1842, Elisha Hubbell took Edwin Wooster in Company with him, keeping the store at the east end of the bridge and collecting tolls. They were succeeded in 1845 by William A. Bradley until April 1, 1848 when George Sharpe took the place and remained there six years. The store was on the north side at the east end of the bridge and on the south side was a house which was occupied by the bridge tender and his family. The bridge tender hired the bridge by the year, and collected the toll, his profit being in what he collected as tolls, over and above the yearly rental.

On Nov. 13, 1853, there was a great freshet which washed down the west end abutment "and one third of the bridge went off". It was rebuilt by Philo Smith. April 30, 1854, there was a freshet about two inches higher than the one in the preceding November, partially undermining the west pier so that it settled down 18 inches.

Wm A. Bradley rented it again for three years, from Apr. 1, 1854 to Apr. 1, 1857.

In February 1857, an ice freshet carried off one pier and two thirds of the bridge, but it was rebuilt in the same year. In the spring of 1858, George Sharpe hired it again for three years. Charles Smith and others operated it until 1875, when it was carried off again by a freshet, and then the stock company decided not to rebuild.

All of these bridges, from the one built by Elisha Hubbell in 1837, appear to have been wooden, covered bridges.

Wm A. Clark of Monroe, the majority stock holder, was bought out in 1875 by Wm A. Bradley, who set out to have the towns of Oxford and Monroe rebuild, which they did in 1876. The new bridge was of the suspension type, of wrought iron, this type having been selected as it was less likely to be carried away in a freshet. Its cost was \$13,225.78, the towns of Oxford and Monroe each paying one half of the expense.

Charles Gilbert rented it for three years to 1879, when it was transferred from the towns to the counties. The charter was then annulled by the Legislature, and the tolls were abolished. It was operated as a free bridge until 1918, when it was taken down because of the building of the Stevenson Dam, over which traffic has since flowed.

The Stevenson Dam on the Housatonic River and Zoar Lake.

The dam was erected, by the Connecticut Light and Power Company, to provide water power for generating electricity by hydraulic

turbines. It is located on the Housatonic River, the Oxford end being a short distance from the junction of Copper Mine and Freeman Roads, at "river-mile 19.3", and the reservoir is known as "Zoar Lake", being named after the old settlement of Zoar on the Stevenson side of the river. This settlement, and the bridge which connected it with Oxford, were both inundated by the new reservoir. The reservoir has a drainage area of 1543 square miles. A highway is located on top of the dam and is called Stevenson Bridge.

The maximum base width of the dam (which is a concrete, gravity type structure) is 81 feet, and the maximum height to crest elevation is 122 feet; its length is 1213 feet. It backs up a pond having, at crest elevation, a length of approximately 10 miles.

The power-house is located at the Stevenson side of the dam and the latter has an output capability of 28,750 kilowatts. Four turbo-generators have been installed, three of 7000 each and one of 7750 K.W. The annual output during a year of average stream flow is 97,650,000 Kilowatt hours, which is said to meet the annual electrical requirements of the town of Oxford, as it is now constituted, for twenty years.

Work started on the project during the summer of 1917, and the first unit was put into operation Nov. 24, 1919. In 1958, two additional gates were installed at the north (Oxford) end of the dam, in order to increase its spillway capacity, in times of flood; the construction of the Shepaug Dam, further up-stream, necessitating the coordination of the spillway capacity of this and the Stevenson Dam.

It is said that when the Stevenson Dam was first projected, the Power Company planned to put the power house at the Oxford end of the dam, but the Town of Oxford objected to this, so the location was changed to the Stevenson end.

PINE'S BRIDGE

It will be noted that the name is not "Pine Bridge," but "Pine's Bridge", indicating that it was named after someone named "Pine". At a Town Meeting held Oct. 2, 1843, it is recorded that "the report of the committee on the Clark Pine's Bridge fund for 1843 be read and accepted." This would seem to mean that the bridge was named after a man by the name of Clark Pine.

Just when it was built is not exactly on record. It is known however, that the Pine's Bridge Turnpike Co. was incorporated in 1824, showing that the Bridge was in use at that date. And at a town meeting held Jan. 7, 1799, it was voted "that the selectmen be a committee and view the Place for a Bridge across Naugatuck River at Rimmon and make a report." As Pine's Bridge is directly opposite Rock Rimmon, the reference is undoubtedly to Pine's Bridge.

The Oxford Turnpike Company had been incorporated in 1795, and

the Southbury-Oxford Turnpike, turned off Route 67 at Seymour, going north over Rimmon Hill and crossed the Naugatuck at Rock Rimmon.

Just what the reference is to "the Clark Pine's Bridge Fund" in 1843, is not entirely clear; but it may be that Oxford had built the bridge or that it had bought the bridge from the Oxford Turnpike Company. As we have already stated, the Pine's Bridge Turnpike Co. had ceased operation in 1836, and the road from Oxford to Seymour had been improved and the Derby-New Haven Turnpike built, thus giving a practically level road from Oxford to New Haven. So probably the old turnpike route to Pine's Bridge had been abandoned by 1843, and the town had to take over the bridge.

In 1871, the town of Beacon Falls was incorporated out of parts of Bethany, Oxford, Naugatuck, and Seymour, including Pine's Bridge.

CHAPTER 14

OCEAN BORNE COMMERCE

After the settlers had established themselves in Oxford, clearing their lands and building roads over a period of some seventy years, from about 1680 to 1750, they began to have crops and live stock over and above the needs of their own families, and found an outlet for the surplus in water-borne commerce with Boston, New York and other colonies and with the West Indies, through the port of Derby. That town, being at the head of navigation on the Housatonic was considerably nearer to Oxford, Woodbury, Newtown etc. than Bridgeport or New Haven. It was important to have a port as far inland as possible, because transportation by water was much cheaper and quicker than overland haulage on the unspeakably bad roads that existed before the building of the turnpikes, which did not start until 1792.

One of the chief influences on the commercial prosperity was the end of the so-called "French and Indian War", sometimes known as the "Seven Years War", although it actually lasted from 1754 to 1763. The issue was the mastery of the Ohio Valley, either by the English or the French. At first, the war went badly for the English, with Braddock's defeat in Pennsylvania in July of 1755. But by 1758, things had turned in favor of the English with the capture of Louisburg on Cape Breton in Canada and of Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburg), and then with the victory of General Wolfe at Quebec on September 12, 1759. France had now had enough and signed a treaty of peace with the English.

In the meantime, English fleets had seized the West Indies, with their rich sugar trade. The end of the French and Indian War in 1763 finished the threat of raids by the combined French and Indians.

From then on the commercial prosperity of Derby rose rapidly. That town had an indirect trade with England through the other colonies and the West Indies. To the Leeward and the Windward Islands of the Caribbean Sea, they sent live stock and provisions, and brought back the products of these islands, such as sugar, wines, fruits, and manufactured goods of France, Spain, and Holland. "Grain of all kinds, pork, butter and cheese came to Derby from Woodbury, Waterbury, New Milford and towns around in great abundance." Persons living in 1880 had seen the old road (now called Derby Ave.) lined and crowded with loaded teams by the hundred, waiting their turn to deliver their goods for shipping. Imports were correspondingly large, hogsheads of rum, brandies, sugar and molasses were

brought into the port of Derby and carried into the interior. "This trade was carried on in vessels of eighty to one hundred tons which were built in shipyards at Derby Landing, where the first ship building was conducted by Thomas Wheeler about 1657. The launching of a vessel was always a great curiosity and people came from miles around to see launching day, with colors flying, a great holiday. Commerce through Derby declined during the Revolution, but picked up after England acknowledged the independence of the Colonies, and reached its culmination about the year 1800.

By about 1807, Derby's commerce began to decline. "There were seemingly three causes for this; the first was the fierce war between England and the French under Napoleon, the second was the fact that the farmers in this region, in their eagerness to make a profit, sent off the products of their soil without sufficiently compensating the ground for the loss of its fertilizing elements, so that finally their soil became exhausted and their crops failed. The third cause was the increasing competition of Derby as a port, on the part of New Haven and Bridgeport. New Haven contrived and executed the plan to tap the Derby traffic by cutting a road south of Woodbridge Hills to Derby, (the Derby Pike) and by offering the facilities of a harbor unobstructed by ice in winter. New Haven was willing also to accept a lesser rate of profit, and the wagons from Oxford, Woodbury etc. continued on through and past Derby to New Haven.

"Bridgeport constructed the Bridgeport and Newtown turnpike in 1801, (Route 25) which immediately drew off Derby's previous trade from Newtown, Brookfield, New Milford and adjacent places. Bridgeport harbor, being ice free, the millers of the above mentioned places, frequently having pressing orders, paid cash for grain instead of barter, and the regularity of the Bridgeport market boats gave a better sale for the farm products at New York, than when shipped from Derby. Also the roads to Bridgeport were less sandy than those to Derby, and so better adapted to loaded wagons. Many a day no less than a hundred wagons were counted passing over the Bridgeport-Newtown turnpike to empty their cargoes at Bridgeport instead of going as formerly to Derby."

Finally, in 1806, Napoleon Bonaparte issued the "Berlin Decree" in which he charged England with violating the law of nations, with making prisoners of non-combatants, with seizing private property, with blockading unfortified towns and mouths of rivers, whole coasts and empires. He declared that till she mended her ways, the whole coast of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales was in a state of Blockade. All trade with the British islands was forbidden. No vessel which had so much as touched at an English port was to be suffered to enter any port or colony of France.

The decree was directed against all neutral trade. But the only neutral trade was that carried on in American vessels.

“From the beginning of colonization in America, down to the French and Indian War, the colonizing powers of Europe had but one rule for colonial trade. By this rule, the mother country and the mother country alone, could traffic with her colonies. Neither England, France, Holland, Portugal nor Spain would suffer goods to be carried to their colonies under a foreign flag nor under their own flag on account of a foreign importer. Nor would they suffer the produce of their colonies to be carried in foreign ships to foreign countries unless the ship first touched at the parent state.”

“By 1807, conditions had become so bad that Jefferson told Congress that Napoleon was determined to enforce the Berlin Decree and that the whole world would be laid under interdict by both England and France, and asked, if our ships, our sailors and our goods were to be seized the moment they left our harbor, was it not better to keep them at home. In a word, he proposed an embargo, and on Dec. 22, 1807, an embargo unlimited as to time, was in force.”

As at that time, the chief business of the inhabitants of Oxford was the raising of produce and live-stock for the foreign and coastal trade, through the ports of Derby and New Haven, this embargo hit the town very hard, and the months between the commencement of the embargo in December 1807 to the autumn of 1808 must surely have been a period of “hard times”.

But the Town of Oxford, small though it was, refused to take these hardships “lying down”, and on Sept. 19, 1808 it passed the following resolution in Town Meeting:

“Sep. 19, 1808 Voted to Petition the president of the United States to recommend the repeal of the Imbargo Law to the next session of Congress.

Voted that the Inhabitants of the town of Oxford do Disapprove of the Laws Laying an Embargo upon the commerce of the United States, and that it is their wish that all proper measures may be taken for the purpose of having said Laws repealed.

Voted that the selectmen of the town be directed to prepare and present a petition to the President of the United States in the name of the Inhabitants of the Town of Oxford praying him to recommend a total repeal of the Laws laying the embargo to the next Session of Congress provided that the Generality of the Towns in this State prefer similar petitions.

Voted that the selectmen send a copy of said petition to the next Congress directed to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and to the President of the Senate of the United States”

So ocean borne commerce for Oxford soon came to an end, and its people began to turn their attention to the creation of local industries.

CHAPTER 15

GRIST MILLS AND SAW MILLS

The earliest mills in Oxford operated by water power were probably grist mills, followed closely by saw mills. Often both saw mills and grist mills were located on the same mill pond.

The earliest actual record of such mills in the general vicinity was the building of a grist mill in Woodbury, probably in 1674, on Quarter Mile Brook. Before this date, grain had to be pounded out to flour in mortars by a pestle, - a slow and tiresome process, and so in that year they sent a man back to Stratford on horseback who procured there two small mill stones, so small in fact that the man brought them to Woodbury through the forests slung across his horse's back.

While these could only grind one bushel of grain a day, it was a vast improvement over the hand process, and great was the rejoicing when the mill started up. Then, sometime prior to 1683, a combined saw and grist mill was built on the Pomperaug River. There do not seem to be any records of grist or saw mills in Oxford quite so early as those in Woodbury, and such records as there are do not tell when the mills were erected.

THE MILLS ON EIGHT-MILE BROOK

At this location, on the north side of Barry Road in Quaker's Farm, there were, apparently, two mills, namely a grist mill on the east bank of the brook, and a saw mill on the west bank. The grist mill disappeared long ago, there being no trace of the building when a search was made for it in 1946. Mr. R. Z. Hawkins stated that it was on the east bank and that some one had purchased the mill stones from him and removed them.

The photograph (taken about 1895) shown here is of the saw mill on the west side of the brook, and shows the Lewis Wooster house in the distance. Seated in the carriage just across the bridge are Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Hawkins whose house was at the northwest corner of Bowers Hill Road and Good Hill Road. In the foreground are Mr. Lewis Wooster and his two boys, Raymond and Noyes Wooster.

Until the building of the present concrete bridge in 1957-1958, a considerable portion of the old dam remained. The mill pond was perhaps the largest of any in Oxford. It will be noticed now, that from



Dam and Mill Pond on 8 Mile Brook at Barry Rd. Just before Building Concrete Bridge.



Saw Mill on 8 Mile Brook at Barry Road.

the present bridge looking southward, one sees that the brook has two channels, separated by a narrow island. Originally the dividing strip of land ran all the way to the dam, and there were two small bridges, one over the main brook (the west channel) and the other over the east channel, which was the "spillway", and obviously dug by men, as it is perfectly straight.

At some later time, the "spillway" was filled in, thus doing away with the eastern bridge. This left but one channel which was not sufficient to handle flood water and hence Barry Road was often flooded. The new and much longer concrete bridge (built by State aid), spans both channels.

There seems to be no record of the actual date when the mill and dam were built. About 1700, Dr. Butler had come into this general neighborhood, Abraham Wooster in 1722 and Zachariah Hawkins about 1743. Wooster built his own mill at his farm on Good Hill Road, so it seems unlikely that he would have built another mill so close by.

It may have been built by Zachariah Hawkins, who was a very enterprising man, but no actual records have been found of his having done so.

The earliest mention of the property in the Derby Land records are said to be the following:

1. In 1771 Capt. Zachariah Hawkins property is mentioned as boundary for the mill land.
2. In 1776 Alex Oviet Jr. and Penelope Oviet deeded the mill to Elisha Wooster.

So, all that is known of the old mill is that it was built prior to 1771, possibly as early as 1750.

Elisha Wooster apparently sold the property to B. Burwell (or Burrel) for the latter sold it to Capt. Isaac Tomlinson; a house, barns, mill and 14 acres. Capt. Tomlinson gave it to David Tomlinson who in turn sold it to Charles and Samuel Woodin. On Jan. 7, 1797 they sold to Hiram Johnson "2 acres and dwelling and grist mill formerly owned by D. Tomlinson"

In the Oxford land records, reference is made to the mill in a deed dated Aug. 26, 1799 from Joseph Wooster to Benjamin Loveland, as being "a sawmill and grist mill known as the Burrell Mills." A similar reference is made to the Burrel's saw and grist mill.

The saw mill was operated for some twenty years around 1868 by H. E. Bidwell in connection with his screw factory. About 1926, Mr. Robert Z. Hawkins of Quaker Farms bought the sawmill and operated it until 1932 when he sold the property to the Ansonia Water Works.

Another saw mill on Eight Mile Brook was located at its junction with the Housatonic River in the section known as "Punkups" in the valley of the Housatonic River from Five Mile Brook to some distance above Zoar Bridge, which was at one time a prosperous neighborhood.

Further up Eight Mile Brook, at Hurley Road, just off Route 188, the 1868 map of Oxford shows a saw mill marked "R.B.L. & Bro." It seems probable that "R.B.L." was Robert Bruce Limburner who had come to Southford in 1863. He had two brothers, John Jr. and Wallace, the latter of whom moved to South Norwalk, so probably it was John Jr. who was the partner of Robert Bruce Limburner in this saw mill. Robert Bruce Limburner is known to have made paper board, in Southford. He retired in 1870.

For some years after that the mill belonged to a family named Bostwick and the pond was known in the late 80's as "Bostwick Pond".

Still further up Eight Mile Brook, there was a saw mill a short distance northeast of Hurley Rd.

These seem to be all of the saw mills and grist mills on Eight Mile Brook, at one time or another, but which of them is the oldest is uncertain.

In the Quaker Farms section there was another saw mill, this one on the south branch of the Kettletown Brook. It was built by Abraham Wooster who bought the land in 1722 and is on record as having built "a mansion house and a saw mill". The mill was located a little northeast of Good Hill Road.

Still another on the west side of town is shown on the 1868 Oxford map, on Hull's Hill, it being designated as "Old Mill," and on "Old Mill Race" from Kettletown Brook where the race joins the Housatonic River. It was owned in 1868 by E. and H. Wheeler.

On the east side of town, the following were the saw mills and grist mills on Little River:

1. At Hogs Back Road a saw mill which Sharpe says was there "from time immemorial"

2. Just below Oxford Center and just south of where Towantic Brook flows into the Little River, just before where the river now crosses Route 67. It is mentioned in a deed given in 1823 by Ruth Terrell to St. Peters Church, as "the saw mill place belonging to Joel Perry, and Samuel Riggs on the Turnpike Road". It was apparently a family partnership for Samuel Rigg's sister, Betsy Riggs married Joel Perry Sep. 17, 1790. As Joel Perry was born in 1769, he was therefore twenty one years old when he married, and he and Riggs may have built the mill some time after 1790. It is shown on the 1868 map of Oxford as a sawmill owned by Samuel Perry. Sharpe, writing in 1910, says "there remain the abutments of the dam and the walls on which stood a saw mill, long owned by Joel Perry."

3. On Little River at Towantic Brook. It is shown on the 1868 map as owned by E. A. Carley. The dam was located just south of where Towantic Brook flows into Little River and just before the river again crosses Route 67. Ruth Terrell's deed to St. Peter's Church in 1823 mentions it as "the mill seat of French and Porter."

Sharpe says of it "Next below (Joel Perry) a Mr. French had a

grist mill, owned later by Eli Carley, then by S. P. Sanford, and in 1910 by Llewellyn Andrew. A cider mill and distillery was also run in connection with it in the Fall Season, but the distillery part of the business was abandoned long before 1910.

4. Just below Seth Den Road where the outlet from Swan Lake flows into Little River, there was a saw mill built in 1852 by Sheldon Church, who owned nearly a square mile of land on which was sufficient timber to keep the mill supplied during the season of available water power without using more than the annual growth of the trees would amount to. This later was owned (in 1890) by S. P. Sanford.

5. The saw mill furthest south within the limits of the town was that built by Capt. John Wooster, at Park Road at least as early as 1747 when there is a record of a mill property sold there in that year. It was operated later by William and Sheldon Church about 1890 and still later by Mark Lounsbury, by whom it was leased to Edward L. Hoadley. It is still operated by Joseph Montriski. The grist mill at this site was discontinued.

On the Naugatuck Watershed in the eastern section of the town, the 1868 Oxford map shows a grist and saw mill on Long Meadow Brook, at Griswold Road; also a sawmill on the eastern side of Chestnut Tree Hill on the brook which empties into the Naugatuck River at Pine's Bridge. It was located southwest of the Old Pike and east of Chestnut Tree Hill Road and there was another sawmill lower down on the same brook about 1/4 mile from the Naugatuck River. All in all, there have been in the town thirteen saw mills and three grist mills operated by water power.

The 1819 "Gazeteer of Connecticut" makes no direct mention of saw mills in Oxford, but states "There is a large proportion of forests (in Oxford), the timber of which is principally oak, walnut, and chestnut. Considerable quantities of wood and timber are annually got to market, principally to New Haven, but some of which is sent to New York." This statement of course presupposes the existence of saw mills at that date.

CHAPTER 16

SMALL FACTORIES

In 1877, Mr. F. J. Kingsbury, an elderly New Haven man writes

“Prior to the War of 1812, I do not think that any branch of manufacturing in Connecticut had met with an assured and marked success. When the war closed our ports, then, as one article after another which we had hitherto imported grew scarce, necessity, that mother of invention, drove us into supplying the deficiency, and for three years manufacturers flourished. On the Declaration of Peace in 1815 however, the ports were again opened, and for a while things were in chaos. But much machinery had been built, much experience gained and much skill acquired. Then in 1816, the Tariff bill became a law and Connecticut began to be a manufacturing state. Mills began to multiply along the water courses, and farmers’ sons and daughters left their homes in the hills and went to the mills in the valleys.”

On June 1, 1812, Congress declared war against Great Britain. It however was an unpopular war, and had been opposed by virtually the entire commercial section of New England, whose merchants were injured more by embargoes and “non-intercourse” than they were by British cruisers. The legislatures of the New England States condemned the war openly and refused to allow their militia to serve outside their State.

However, a Company of artillery was formed in Humphreysville, and sent to New London and stationed at the mouth of the Thames. The writer of this statement says that the Company included a few men from Oxford, but mentions the name of only one, Chauncey Hatch. The writer was apparently unable to find records of the men in the Company, but gives a list of the following few names he had obtained from inscriptions in the cemeteries, and from elderly people then living:

Col. Ira Smith, Capt. David Holbrook, Capt. Amadeus Dibble, Anson Baldwin, Jesse Baldwin, Abel Bassett, Samuel Bassett, William Bassett, James Bowman, Lewis Broadwell, Thomas Gilyard, Jesse Hartshorn, Chauncey Hatch, from Oxford.

In August of 1814, the Treaty of Ghent was signed and the war was officially ended. While not many of Oxford’s citizens served in the war, it had a devastating effect on their lives and business. The

Embargo Act seriously hampered their commerce; and the war, with its new embargo finally wiped it out. It can easily be imagined in what a plight the people of Oxford found themselves, with their soil badly depleted and their commerce about gone. Nothing daunted, however, they soon found themselves caught up in that tremendous growth of manufactures which occurred all through New England; the making of things that formerly they had had to buy abroad.

Here we may pause to consider some of the economic conditions in New England as set forth in the "Connecticut State Register of 1813" in which a complete list of Rates is given, at which "Taxable Polls and Estates are put in the Grand Levy in the State of Connecticut". Some of its most interesting features follow:

"Each man from 21 to 70 years of age had to pay a poll tax at a valuation of \$60. Young men 18 to 21 had a similar tax at a valuation of \$30. Land was held relatively cheap, ploughland being valued the highest, at \$1.67 per acre, and the lowest unenclosed land, third rate, at 9¢ per acre."

Stallions were the most valuable animals, rated at \$67. each, next oxen and bulls \$10. each. Carriages of all kinds were evidently luxuries, a coach (i.e. "a four wheeled pleasure carriage drawn by two horses"), was valued at \$168., a chariot ("a wheel carriage of pleasure, a half coach) \$134. The chaise, made famous as "the One Horse Shay" was valued all the way from \$15. up to \$60.; a "light-two wheeled pleasure carriage commonly drawn by one horse, and furnished with a hood or top that may be let down. A phaeton was "a fourwheel open chaise," \$100. A chair was a "sort of open chaise" and valued about the same. In 1813, a dollar was equivalent to six shillings; one shilling equivalent to 16 2/3 cents.

It will be noted that sheep were "added as a penalty" at 75¢ each. Was this a sort of bonus to stimulate sheep-raising? Oxford seems to have received its impetus towards manufacturing from the introduction of Merino sheep into Chusetown (now Seymour) by Gen. Humphreys in 1802. He had been United States Minister to Spain in 1797 and was much impressed with the superiority of these sheep and determined to bring back some of them to Connecticut. In an essay on the subject of the improvement of sheep in the United States, addressed to the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Agriculture, we find,

"The race of Merinos, probably first imported from Barbary to Europe, are believed to have become superior to the original stock. Convinced that this race of sheep might be introduced with great benefit to the country (the United States), I contracted for one hundred, composed of twenty-five rams, and seventy-five ewes from one to two years old. On the 10th of April last (1802) they were embarked in the Tagus on board the ship "Perseverance" of 250 tons, Caleb Coggeshall, Master. In about fifty days,

twenty-one rams and seventy ewes were landed at Derby in Connecticut; they having been shifted at New York on board of a sloop destined to that river (Ousatonic)."

Gen. Humphreys sold a part of his flock to some of the more enterprising farmers around Seymour for the improvement of their sheep, at one hundred dollars per head, a price, it is said, less than the cost to him. "Soon the price of a Humphreys merino buck went up to from \$1500. to \$2000. and that of ewes from \$1000. to \$1500." Oxford became rapidly a sheep raising and wool producing community.

Woolen goods were made originally entirely in the homes, but the raw woolen fleece had to undergo extensive preparation before it was ready for the wives and daughters of the farmers to turn it into yarn.

Fleeces had to be opened with care, and have all pitched or tarred locks, daglocks, brands and feltings cut out. The white locks were carefully tossed and separated and dyed. Blue, dyed with indigo, was the favorite color.

The next process was carding, in which after thorough greasing, the wool was drawn over a wire brush, by hand. The carding process was taken over quite early by carding mills, operated by water power, but the rest of the work of spinning into yarn and weaving into cloth was done in the home after the wool was returned from the carding mill.

A mention of such a carding mill is contained in the account about Oxford in the 1819 "Gazeteer of Connecticut", in which it is noted that there were 3 carding machines "for customers". This means that they did the carding of wool sent to the mill by farmers and later returned it to them.

After the wool was spun and woven, the cloth had to undergo a process known as "fulling" (a name, incidentally which is preserved in the name, "Fulling Mill Brook", in Naugatuck). This process consisted of treating the cloth with a clay, known as Fuller's Earth, which exercised a cleaning action on woolen cloth by absorbing greasy matters. This soon came to be done in mills known as fulling mills, and in which the cloth was beaten in water containing this clay, the machinery being driven by water power.

It is to be understood that Gen. Humphrey's first mill was of this sort, namely for carding and fulling only, the spinning and weaving being done at the homes of the inhabitants throughout the community.

However, in 1810, Gen. Humphreys procured a charter from the legislature and bought the fulling mills at the falls of the Naugatuck and commenced the manufacture of broadcloth, the first manufacture of broadcloth in the United States. This is so stated in an "Historical Sketch of Seymour" by Dr. J. Kendall. Orcutt's "History of Derby" on the other hand says that "Gen. Humphreys in 1808 had the reputation of producing the best quality of that kind of goods in America."

Here it should be said that the "broadcloth" of that day was a heavy, expensive woolen fabric used for the finest garments, such as

men's frockcoats, full dress evening suits etc. (In recent years the term "broadcloth" has been applied to a light cotton material used for men's shirts).

Much of the work in Gen. Humphreys' woolen mill was done by apprentice boys, and he "took great interest in their discipline and education." It is said that "seventy of these boys were indentured at the same time from the New York Almshouses, and others from the neighboring villages. He established, for these boys, evening and Sunday schools with competent teachers. "The boys were officered and drilled in military tactics and when there were visitors from abroad, the boys were marched out of the mill and made to pass in review."

We do not know whether there were any boys from Oxford that became Humphreys' apprentices, but we do know that two of the apprentices, Samuel Wire and Isaac Rowe came to Oxford later as grown men and established businesses of their own.

"In 1822, Gen Humphreys' mill passed into the hands of John W. DeForest, Lewis Waln and Jeremiah Fisher Leaming, and was converted by them into a manufactory of cotton cloth."

"The planting of cotton had started in the United States around 1789, and by 1794 Eli Whitney had received his patent on the cotton gin, and the price of cotton rose from 14 1/2 cts. per lb. in 1790 to 44 cents in 1799." Evidently cotton offered a better return than the broadcloth.

The 1819 "The Gazeteer of Connecticut" says that the town had in that year, one Woolen Factory, two Fulling mills and three Carding Machines for customers, but does not give the names of the owners or the location of the mills.

No definite record has been found of which woolen mill was the first to operate in Oxford. It was presumably either the Tomlinson mill on Eight Mile Brook, or the Capt. Wire mill on Little River.

The Tomlinson mill was located in Quakers' Farm on Eight Mile Brook about a third of a mile north of Christ Church. It was part of the estate of David Tomlinson when he died in 1824. He had come to Oxford from Woodbury at the age of 18 or 20, (about 1780) being placed in charge of land owned by his father, Capt. Isaac Tomlinson. In 1784 he married Lorena Bacon, daughter of Jabez Bacon, said to have been the richest man in Woodbury. Capt. Isaac Tomlinson also was well-to-do, so the young couple could readily have commanded sufficient capital to build and equip the mill.

At the time of its sale in 1824, the property was described in the deed as "a woolen factory situated in Quakers' Farm, on ye eight mile brook, so called, about an hundred rods northerly from ye chapel with all ye machinery and implements belonging thereto, with all ye water privileges heretofore claimed as belonging to sd factory, also a dye

shop with ye kettles and implements thereunto belonging, also a small dwelling house standing near said factory, with ye land on which sd buildings stand.”

The buyers of this factory, Feb. 6, 1824 were Isaac Rowe Jr. and Frederick Rowe, twin sons of Isaac Rowe, Sr. who had come from Brattleboro, Vt. to work for Gen Humphreys (presumably as an apprentice) in the latter's woolen mill at Humphreysville. A few years later, Isaac sold out to his twin brother, Frederick, and in 1831 the latter sold the “woolen manufactory and dwelling house, with the water privilege and land” to Ivan Sherman and Horace Candee, the specifications showing what progress had been made in the machinery used in the manufacture of woolens, as a “patent shearing machine, spinning jenny, gigg mill for napping cloth, 1 broad loom, set press papers, roll of filleting cards, clothiers brushes, 4 shutters, 100 seazles or more.”

One wonders if the word “seazle” should not be “teazle,” an instrument used for raising the nap.

This was apparently a complete woolen mill, from the raw wool to the finished goods. Broadcloth was manufactured in this mill as early as 1824, and probably earlier, and continued for several years thereafter.

In 1833, Sherman and Candee sold the property to Benjamin Hawley of Cherryfield, Maine and Mary Burrett of Southbury. William DeForest and Hine were for some years the proprietors of the mill, manufacturing satinet (a twilled cloth of cotton and wool), employing about a dozen people. The factory was closed in 1850.

The Capt. Wire Woolen Mill was located on the Little River, just north of where the southern end of Chestnut Tree Hill Road (now known as Wire Hill Road) joins Route 67.

Capt. Samuel Wire was born in 1789 and came to Humphreysville in 1802, when he was but thirteen years old to “learn the clothing business as one of Gen. Humphrey's apprentices” In 1812, age 23, he married Nancy Wooster, sister of Gen. Clark Wooster and on Nov. 7, 1814 he purchased from John W. Wooster, one half of a “factory, house, barn, dam and Waterworks, the factory being mentioned in the town records as a “clothiers' shop and fulling mill”. (The word “clothier,” used here does not mean a seller of suits or other garments, but merely the maker of cloth).

“Capt. Wire carried on the business for about thirty years (to 1844). The wool from sheep on the surrounding farms was brought to the mill to be carded and spun.”

It should be noted that the spinning into yarn was done there as well as the carding, thus taking the spinning away from the homes, and causing a minor industrial revolution. “Many paid for these two processes and then took the yarn home to knit into stockings, mittens,

etc., or to be woven into cloth on hand looms." As it was a fulling mill also, the cloth presumably was returned to the mill for fulling. "Much cloth was, however, manufactured at this mill, principally satin." "This was generally shipped to commission merchants in New York, but was also retailed to people in the vicinity of the mill."

Another Woolen Mill of a somewhat later date was that located in the Punkups section on Eight Mile Brook, a short distance from where it empties into the Housatonic River.

"James Dawson, in company with a man by the name of Lees, father of Robert Lees, began business there about 1825, and manufactured broadcloth and cassimeres". (Cassimeres was a thin twilled woolen cloth.)"

Dawson was born in Yorkshire, England, in 1800, and was therefore about 25 when he began business at Punkup. Some years later he sold out to Ira Bradley and William Guthrie of Southbury, who sold the property to James and Samuel Radcliffe of Bristol, Conn., July 1, 1853.

A mortgage deed given by Dawson in 1851 gives some details of the machinery; "four carding machines, three broad power looms, a spinning jack, two shearing machines, a gig, a brushing machine, two frames for twisting and spooling stocking yarn, and sundry articles not herein enumerated." This mill seems to have continued in operation somewhat longer than the others in Oxford.

From the foregoing it is clear that Oxford, from about 1800 to 1850, besides being a farming region, was a prosperous sheep growing district, with a considerable woolen industry.

With the exception of the saw mills and grist mills, these three woolen mills appear to have been the only factories operated by machinery in Oxford in the first half of the nineteenth century, the power being furnished by water wheels.

The Hat Factory

At the same time, in Oxford Center "the manufacture of hats was a leading industry carried on in shops a few rods north of the hotel on the Oxford-Southbury Road (Route 67). Sharpe says it was carried on for nearly fifty years, but neglects to say when it started or when it ended. The Oxford map of 1868 does not show them or make mention of them in the list of town industries. They probably died about 1850 when most of the other small industries went out of existence, and fifty years back of that would make the hat industry start about 1800, which seems likely, as the Connecticut Gazeteer of 1819 says that "the town has one large Hat Factory." J. W. Barber in his "Historical Collections" published in 1838 says "there is an extensive hat manufactory owned by Hunt and Crosby." Sharpe does not say who were the original proprietors, but says that "About 1830, and for some time

thereafter, Seth Crosby was the proprietor, said to have employed at one time about seventy-five men. Four partners succeeded him, Garry Riggs, George Fuller, Charles Ranson and Agar Cable. Henry Dunham followed, keeping a general store in addition to managing the hat business. He usually found a ready sale in New York City for all the hats the men could make, or rather what the men would make, for the hatters were a very jolly, independent sort of men, and although they mostly worked "by the piece", and the more hats they made, the bigger their pay, they had a sort of chapel arrangement, and what the "chapel" ordered was, to a great extent, the law of the shop."

These hats were probably made of felt, although in the earlier days they may have been of beaver. A writer in 1856 says, "The materials used in making hats are the furs of hares and rabbits (felt), and also wool and beaver. The beaver is reserved for the finer hats."

The hats were made, apparently, by hand, without the assistance of machinery, inasmuch as there was no water power available at this location.

The Daguerreotype Case Factory

Somewhat north of the hat factory, in Red City, on the Southbury Road (Route 67), David Scott, about 1855, manufactured cases for daguerreotypes and ambrotypes. The daguerreotype was the earliest form of photograph. Instead of the modern film, or the earlier glass plate of photography, Daguerre, the Frenchman who invented the process, used surfaces of pure silver, plated on copper. The ambrotype, a later development, used a film of collodion coated on a glass plate "the lights of which were formed by a bright surface of reduced silver, and the shadows by a black background showing through the transparent portions of the plate." Both the daguerreotype and the ambrotype faded if exposed to daylight, and so were always enclosed in folding cases made of leather or guttapercha. These cases usually had decorations on the outside, made in the casting, and on the inside, a mat made of brass or copper foil. The pictures had a delicate beauty which is worth preserving, by keeping them shut in their cases.

The Screw Factory on Eight Mile Brook

For about twenty years, around 1868, H. E. Bidwell carried on the manufacture of metal wood screws in the mill on Eight Mile Brook, at "Old Mill Road," (now Barry Rd.). This was in the old saw mill on the west side of the brook which we have already described, and in which the "up and down" saw was located in the upper storey. Bidwell came from Amherst, Mass., bought the mill and fitted up the lower floor for making small screws. These were the old fashioned blunt-end screw, which required the user to bore a hole in the wood with a gimlet before inserting the screw. It is said that the invention of the

modern gimlet-pointed screw put Bidwell out of business. He sold these screws to hardware dealers throughout this state and to some in Massachusetts and New York State. He also made "auger screws" for manufacturers of augers in Seymour and Westville, and "shear screws" for manufacturers of shears in South Britain and Naugatuck.

Tanneries

When we consider how great the use of leather was in the early days, for clothing and harness, as well as boots, (rubber, of course, being unknown, Goodyear's vulcanizing process not having been invented till 1839) it becomes more apparent, what a part tanneries played in the life of the time. The 1819 "Connecticut Gazeteer" says that there were six tanneries in Oxford at that time.

Where these six early tanneries were located is uncertain. Tradition has it that there was one back of the Stanton house on Capt. Wooster Road in Quaker Farms. Also, there was a tannery near the saw mill in Red City at Hogs Back Road. Another old tannery of which there is a record was in the "Punkups" section of which Sharpe says; "There was a tannery at "Punkups", (the section in the valley on the east side of the Housatonic River, from Five Mile Brook to Zoar Bridge). The tannery had its own original arrangement for grinding bark. It consisted of a huge block of granite, leveled on the upper surface, on which the bark to be ground was laid. A granite wheel or disc about a foot thick and five feet in diameter was rolled over the bark, it being propelled by a horse, hitched to the end of a pole that went through the center of the wheel, as a shaft. The whole contrivance was known as a ring mill, and was very similar to the cider mills of the day, except that the latter used a wooden wheel, weighing some hundred pounds, instead of the granite wheel. In fact, the mill at Punkups was used as a cider mill during the short cider season, and as a bark mill the rest of the year" Sharpe does not say just where it was located, and as it was not operated by water power, it may have been almost anywhere in the Punkups Section.

It is not shown on the Oxford map of 1868, and on that map the only tannery shown is on the Little River just south of where Devaux's garage is now located. It was operated first by Cyrus Fenn and then in 1856 it passed to Anthony B. Hinman, the water power being utilized in grinding the bark.

We have, therefore, accounted for four of the six tanneries mentioned in the 1819 Gazeteer.

1. In Quaker Farms on Capt. Wooster Road
2. In Red City at Hogs Back Road
3. In the Punkups Section
4. Just south of Oxford Center

Where the other two were is unknown.

Shoe Shops

Sharpe says, "There were, about the middle of the 19th Century, many shoe shops in the town, where shoes were made for city and southern trade. There was one near the south end of Riggs St." This is shown on the 1868 Oxford map, on the east side of that road.

Sharpe continues "There were several on the turnpike between Oxford Center and Southford", but no record has been found of them. He then states "There was one at least at Quaker Farms, the latter belonging to Horace Hinman who was in the business there until late in the 1860's."

There were really two shoe shops in Quaker Farms, shown on the 1868 Oxford map and also listed in the "Business Directory" given on that map. The Business Directory lists, "P. Hinman, Boot and Shoe Manufr. District No. 2." School District No. 2 was the Quakers Farms District and in that district his place is shown in the 1868 Map of Oxford, on Old Mill Road, (now Barry Road), about 100 yards downhill from Quaker Farms Road (Route 188); the house being that formerly occupied by the late Mr. Samuel Pomeroy. It is to be noted that he made both boots and shoes, the boots being the heavy knee length leather boots commonly worn by all farmers.

The other place listed in the "Business Directory" was that of "Horace Hinman, Manufr of all Kinds of Ladies Kid Button Boots, Balmorals also Gaiters of Cloth, Morocco etc." His place is shown on the 1868 Oxford map on the west side of Quaker Farms Road just north of the road leading from Quaker Farms Road to and across Eight Mile brook; this now being known as Hawkins Road.

From the variety of the products turned out by him, it would appear that his must have been quite an establishment. Most shoes at that time were ankle height and fastened with special shoe buttons, and the actual buttoning up of the shoes was accomplished by the use of a button-hook, an implement possessed by every family until the early 1900's, but now a curiosity. "Balmorals" were a laced shoe, ankle height or a little higher named after the castle in Scotland which was a favorite resort of Queen Victoria.

Sharpe says there was one near the south end of Riggs St. This is shown on the east side of the road, on the 1868 Oxford map, but neither Sharpe nor the map indicate by whom it was operated.

"Highways & Byways of Connecticut" makes the comment that the shoe shops were located "alongside inns with their transient trade." This may have been true of those shops in Oxford Center, but probably not the two in Quaker Farms. The 1868 Oxford map shows one on the east side of Christian St. just south of the railroad.

In 1871, the price of boots was high, as advertised in the "Seymour Record". G. Hagner, Boot and Shoe Maker advertises "Fine French Calf Sewed Boots, made to order, \$10.00"

Casks and Kegs

The manufacture of wooden casks and kegs in Oxford for the West India trade for some fifty years, was a flourishing industry, starting about 1797 when John Limburner came to Oxford. The factories were known as "cooperages," and several of them were located along the Southbury Turnpike Road (Route 67) between Oxford Center and Southford.

Besides the Limburner cooperage there were others run by Henry Smith, Willis Smith, Harvey Morris, and William Morris. The cooperages employed many men. On the turnpike, between Oxford Center and Southford, one was located where S. E. Hubbell lived in 1910 and another at "the Frazier place on the hill north of Red City". On the 1868 map of Oxford an abandoned road is shown running southwest off Route 67 almost exactly one mile from the junction of Hogs Back Road with Route 67 and ending at Hog's Back Road just west of the residence, in 1868, of D. J. McEwen, now the home of George B. Wesley. This road went over the top of "the hill north of Red City", and just off this abandoned road is shown the place of J. Frazier, where presumably the cooperage was.

Carriage Factory

Ebenezer Fairchild started a carriage factory in Oxford probably about 1830-35. He had learned the trade of carriage builder in the shops of the famous builder of carriages, James Brewster. He married Sarah Candee, daughter of Job Candee. He was quite successful in the carriage business chiefly with the Southern trade and it is said that his son Charles E. Fairchild remembered numerous shipments of vehicles to New York by sloop.

Tailoring

A tailor shop was operated by David M. Clark probably from about 1822 to 1839. He made clothing "for the Southern trade," and is said to have had quite a number of men in his employ. His shop was located in a long one story ell in the rear of his house on the east side of the Oxford-Southbury Road, just north of the old wooden Center School House. As he was born in 1797 and died in 1839, it is a fair inference that his tailoring business started not earlier than 1822 when he was 25 years old.

Hay Rakes

About 1840, Isaac Towner had a shop on the Oxford-Southbury Road, near Towner Lane for the manufacture of Hay Rakes, probably horse-drawn.

Wagon Wheels

About 1860, William Tucker had a shop in Red City on the Oxford-Southbury Road, where he made wagon wheels, horse rakes etc.

Croquet Sets

About 1870, the game of croquet became exceedingly popular, and a turning shop for manufacturing croquet sets was opened on the Seymour Road just below the sawmill of Sheldon Church, south of Seth Den Road.

Copper Mines

"George Lum, born in Derby in 1809 came to Oxford in 1825 and settled on Bowers Hill". His house, still standing, is at the southwest corner of Bowers Hill Road and Freeman Road. Mr. Lum's granddaughter, Miss J. Mabel Lum, a prominent citizen of Quaker Farms, was born there. She says that her grandfather, George Lum, started the copper mine (the shaft of which is still open) just off the southeast side of Copper Mine Road, back of the houses now fronting thereon. She states that the copper ore was of good grade, known as "Peacock", but small in quantity. This, with the cost of transportation to the nearest smelter, made the venture unprofitable, and the project was abandoned. Bearing on possible date of operation of the mine, are the following:

1. "The Humphreysville Copper Co. was organized in 1849. Mr. Raymond French had gone previously from Humphreysville to New York and made inquiries there in regard to the manufacture of copper, etc., and became satisfied that the business was a profitable one. He then returned to Humphreysville and organized the company."

2. George Lum was but 46 yrs. old in 1849 and presumably knew of the formation of the Humphreysville Copper Co. in that year, and this may have prompted him to start the mine.

Miss Lum says that about 50 years ago, say around 1908, a man named Tuthill re-opened the mine, but again it was found unprofitable.

The 1868 Oxford Map shows another coppermine a short distance northeast of Pine's Bridge Road and about 1 1/4 mile west of the Naugatuck River. It will be remembered that Ensign Samuel Riggs, in 1678, was granted "liberty to take up twenty acres of land at or near "Rock Rimmon" on the west side of the Naugatuck River and that Major Ebenezer Johnson, Jeremiah Johnson and a few others also purchased small tracts of land near Rock Rimmon, near what is now called Pine's Bridge.

Mr. Leon Mendelsohn of Pine's Bridge Road says that he has been unable to locate a mine shaft, but only a depression at the site. In the

Oxford Town records there is a lease of the mine made out in 1850 from a man named Riggs to two men, Coit and Post, covering mineral rights, which provides that one seventh of the revenue was to be paid to Riggs, but no record has been found of any action taken under this lease, so altogether it seems unlikely that the mine was ever operated.

Paper and Boxboard Mills in Southford

Southford is so close to Oxford that undoubtedly many Oxford men worked in the paper and boxboard mills there. Up to about 1843, only a sawmill and grist mill were operated there, but in that year Daniel Abbott commenced "the paper mill and other factories" on Jeremy Swamp Brook." In 1855, a paper mill was built on Eight Mile Brook at the Southford Falls, and probably was added to from time to time. In 1863, Robert Bruce Limburner came to Southford from Washington, Conn. "and engaged in a new line of manufacture, making straw paper boards of all kinds in which he was very successful."

The 1868 map of Southbury shows two paper mills, one on Jeremy Swamp Brook owned by Hurd and Bartlett, and the other on Eight Mile Brook at Southford Falls, owned by R. B. Limburner. A raceway connecting the two mills is shown also.

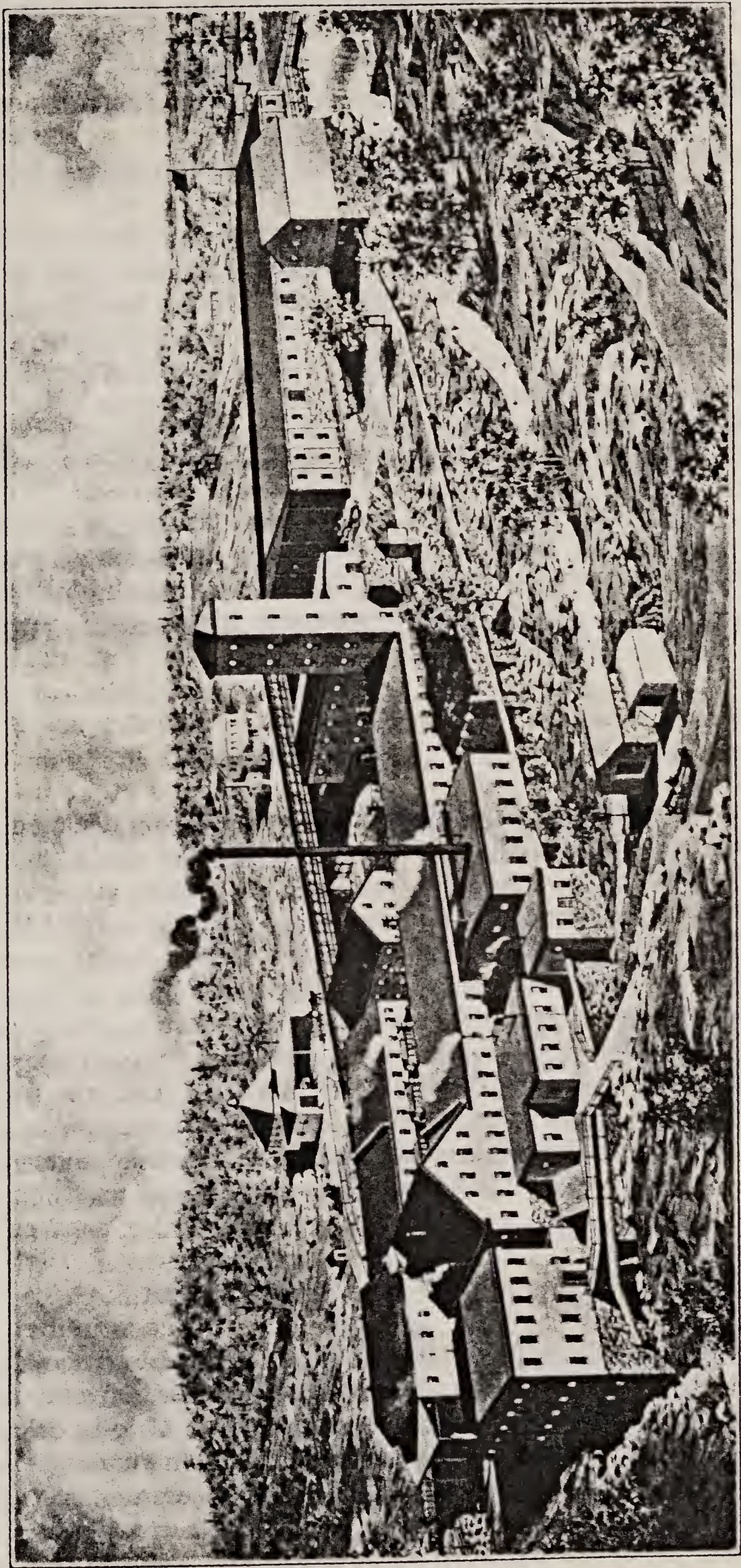
In 1870, Limburner sold his interest in the Southford Falls mill to White and Wells of Waterbury who built the new mill there.

Of the mill on Jeremy Swamp Brook, Sharpe says in the Seymour Record of July 1, 1871 "W. W. Smith is operating the paper mill which after running day and night for a year past cannot stop because of low water, and so a raceway is being excavated from the new dam on the east side, which will not only make an ample supply for the paper works, but will make immediately available two or three good factory sites with any desirable amount of power". (The "dam on the east side" is undoubtedly that at Southford Falls.)

The Diamond Match Co. of New York purchased the Southford Mill, at Eight Mile Brook at the Falls, March 11, 1901, buying it from White and Wells. The historian of that company says that the mill was a very small boxboard manufacturer, having one very narrow cylinder machine. He adds that in the early days rags were used entirely in the manufacture of paper. After the ground wood pulp paper process was developed in this country, the process for sulphite wood paper was adopted in the Southford Mill; exact date unknown. But from the reports of the Health Officer of the town of Oxford for 1901, it would seem likely that the mill was using the sulphite process in that year, and the waste from that process was fouling Eight Mile Brook badly.

Thus in the 1901 Town Report, Dr. Barnes, Health Officer of the Town of Oxford, says "Ice from the ponds on Eight Mile Brook has not been condemned, but now the paper mill is again running, cattle will drink roadside water in preference to that stream."

In 1902 he says "No test has been made of the potability of the



Boxboard Paper Mill, Southford, Connecticut, of the Diamond Match Company

water, in Eight Mile Brook since the reopening of the paper mill above us, but the appearances indicate that for general purposes ice from that stream should not be gathered"

1903 "People should not supply themselves with ice from ponds on Eight Mile Brook"

1907 "The condition of the Eight Mile Brook below the paper mill is positively bad"

In either 1924 or 1925, the entire paper mill portion of the plant was destroyed by fire, leaving a warehouse and some minor buildings. In 1926, the property was sold to the Ansonia Water Co., and the operation of the mill discontinued.

It is interesting to find that some of the girls working in such factories boarded in the mill towns during the week, and transportation home was given them over Sunday. Thus, the following advertisement appeared in the "Seymour Record" Sep. 1, 1871;

"Girls wanted. To work at matches and match boxes in Clark's Match Factory in Woodbridge. Those who desire it will be carried home Saturday night and called for Monday morning provided they live within a reasonable distance of the factory.

F. E. Clark"

SOUTHFORD

In the early and middle 1800s, a cabinet-maker was known as a "shop-joiner", while the out-door wood workman of rougher work was a "jack" and his heavy plane a "jack plane". And going from place to place he was said to be "slapping his jack." A goodly number of these "slap-jacks" lived in the part of Southbury on the turnpike just north of Oxford; in fact, so numerous that the district was known as "slap-jack", until the building of the Union Church, when the place became known as "Union Village." But when a post office was established there about 1840, with John Peck as first postmaster, he had it named "Southford," a name which he with the assistance of Judge Phelps of Woodbury, coined, by taking the first syllable of Southbury and the last one of Oxford, and putting them together as "Southford"

THE CHEMICAL SPRING

In 1870 the country was still ignorant of medical matters and quack doctors flourished. Claims were common in advertisements of extraordinary curative powers of certain spring waters. So in the first number of the "Seymour Record" published May 1st, 1871, "the pool" near Little River is advertised in the following glowing terms:

“The
Oxford
Chalybeate Spring
Water

(formerly known as the Pool)

cures Salt Rheum, Scrofula, Erysipelas, Scaldhead, Cancers, Sore or Inflamed Eyes, Chapped Hands, all Eruptions of the Skin, Kidney Diseases of all kinds, and has been very beneficial in cases of Female Weakness and irregularity. The Spring has been owned for the past fifty years by a gentleman who would not advertise its virtues and who would not sell or lease the property to others. Meanwhile the public eye and ear has been filled with patent medicine phrases and many have flung away their money in that direction. We give away the Elixer of Life to all who will go to the spring for it. Those who cannot come for it we will supply with it, put up in packages of one dozen quart bottles in a package, marked to any address and delivered to the Seymour Depot upon receipt of price (\$2.00 per package) or C.O.D. . Suitable Bathing Accommodations are soon to be erected at the Spring. We are in possession of numerous testimonials from Physicians and others as to the efficacy of this water in the cure of the above mentioned diseases which we will send to any address upon the receipt of a stamp. Address

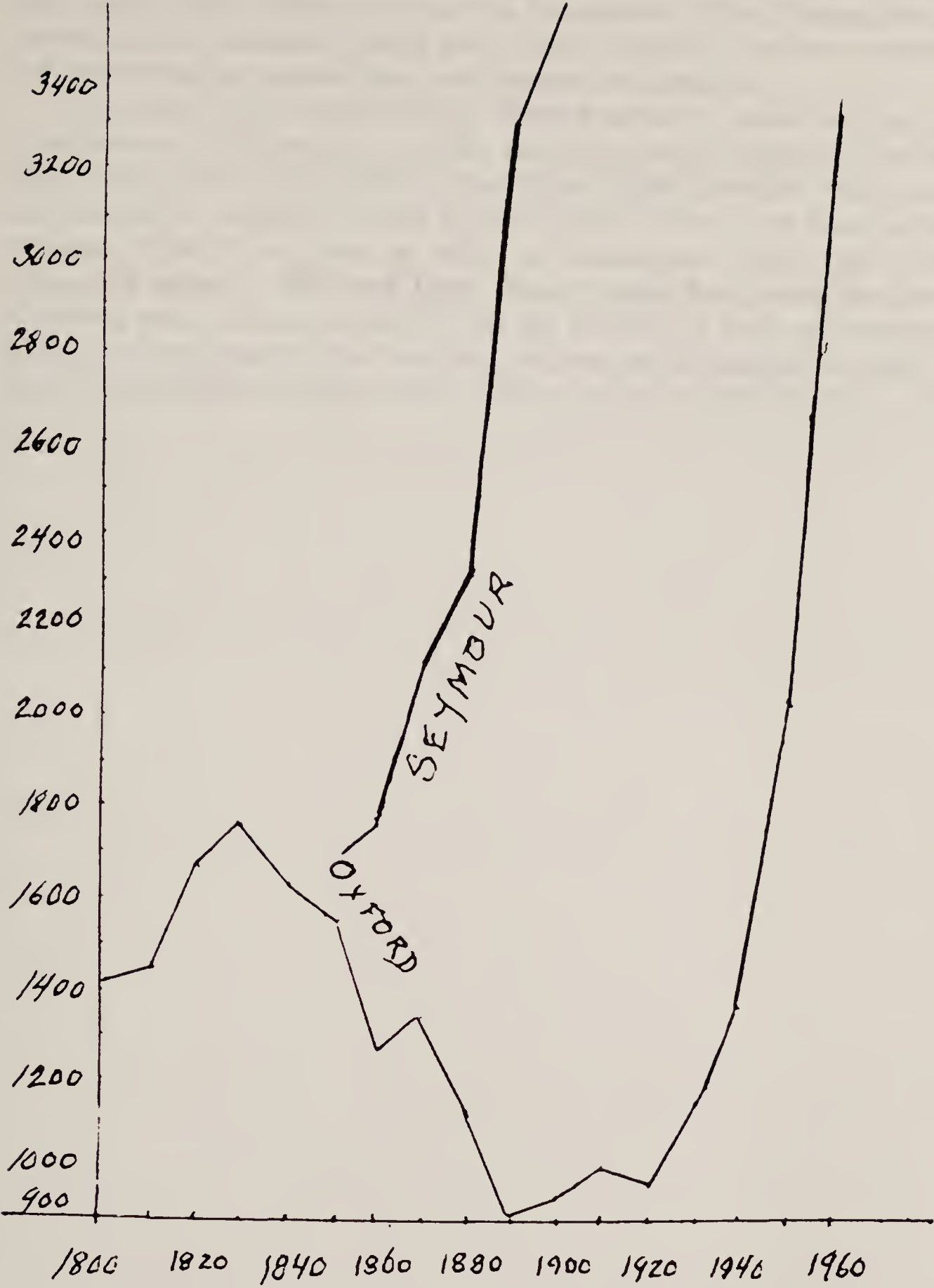
Theodore F. Warner

Geo. N. Candee)
T. F. Warner) Proprietors”

THE END OF LOCAL INDUSTRIES

The Oxford Industries saw their best days in the first half of the 19th century and their death knell was sounded in 1849 when the railroad came up the Naugatuck Valley to Waterbury, bringing with it coal to provide power immensely greater than any of the water powers of Oxford, and transportation with which Oxford could not compete. In addition, many of their best customers were the Southern trade which was effectively wiped out by the Civil War. As a result, one by one the Oxford factories folded up and the operatives moved to the surrounding mill towns and took jobs there.

For some fifty years Oxford had had quite a few small industries, all of which were craftsman shops, without any introduction of modern mass production systems which during the same period sprang up along the Naugatuck River. One thing in particular stands out, namely that all the Oxford industries (except the copper mines) were connected with, or used farm produce; the woolen mills getting their raw materials from sheep grown locally, kegs and casks from out of the



Population of Oxford.

nearby forests, shoes from leather of horses raised on the farms. This was widely different from the Naugatuck Valley industries, which manufactured metallic goods and rubber articles, the raw materials for which had no connection with farms or farming.

The chart of the population of Oxford shows a rapid decline from a maximum of 1763 people in 1830, when the local industries were at their height, to 1564 in 1850. One cause of this decline was probably the migration westward from Connecticut to New York State after the opening of the Erie Canal in 1825. A second, and more rapid decline occurred between 1850 and 1860, during which ten years the local industries were almost wiped out by the arrival of coal and steampower along the Naugatuck River via the railway which opened in 1849. Oxford's population dropped from 1564 persons in 1850 to 902 in 1890.

CHAPTER 17

MEN OF OXFORD DURING THE PERIOD OF INDUSTRIAL PROSPERITY

SAMUEL WIRE

Samuel Wire was born at Greenfield Hills in Fairfield, Connecticut, February 8, 1789. He came to Humphreysville in 1802, when thirteen years of age, "to learn the clothing business", under Gen. Humphreys. The clothing business at that time did not mean the making of garments, it meant the manufacture of cloth. Up to 1802 or 1803, the spinning wheel for flax and wool had been a necessary article in a well-ordered farmhouse, and it was often accompanied by the hand loom. The first mills made no cloth but only dressed and finished the cloth which had been woven on hand looms in the homes of the farmers.

Gen. Humphreys, in 1803 purchased the property at the Falls of the Naugatuck, with its two fulling mills and clothiers shop. He considered it of great importance to the interest of the country that manufacturing, especially of woolen cloths, should be introduced, and in 1806, he built the first woolen factory in the United States. President Dwight of Yale wrote in 1811, "The principal part of the labor in attending the machinery was done by women and children; the former hired at from fifty cents to one dollar per week; the latter apprentices, who are regularly instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic. The wages of the men were from five to twenty-one dollars per month."

"In Europe, manufacturing plants were said to have been commonly seats of vice and disease. Gen. Humphreys determined to prevent these evils. From 1804 to 1810 none of the employees died and disease was normal. Immoral people were discharged. At the outset, discreet parents were reluctant to place their children in it, but soon they were offered in more than sufficient numbers." One of these boys was Samuel Wire.

In 1812 at the age of 23, he married Nancy Wooster, sister of Gen. Clark Wooster, who died after several years, and soon after, Samuel Wire commenced the manufacture of satinet warps in the south part of Oxford, and married Adeline Candee. He represented Oxford in the State Assembly at several sessions, and in 1847 he removed to New Haven. He died May 3, 1874, aged 86 years.

SHELDON CLARK

On Chestnut Tree Hill in Oxford is a tract of land once owned by Yale College. This was given by Sheldon Clark who was born in Oxford Jan. 31, 1785 and died there April 10, 1840. His father died when he was very young and he was adopted by his grandfather, Thomas Clark. Sheldon Clark wished to obtain a liberal education, but his grandfather disapproved of such a course as a waste of time and money, so Sheldon had only about one year of schooling at South Farms, in Litchfield.

However, in 1811, his grandfather died, Sheldon being then 26 years old. At the advice of Prof. Silliman of Yale, Sheldon passed the autumn and winter of 1811-12 in a course of study in connection with the "recitations and discussions of President Dwight". Ten years later (1822) he called on Prof. Silliman and stated that the twenty thousand dollars left to him by his grandfather had increased to twenty-five thousand dollars, that he had no family and might never have one, and that he was disposed to appropriate at least a part of his estate to the encouragement of learning. He therefore deposited \$5000. to be placed at compound interest until it should amount to a sufficient sum for the establishment of the Clark professorship.

In 1824, he gave \$1000. for the purpose of establishing a scholarship. In 1829, he presented to the college an excellent telescope costing \$1000. He was elected to the Connecticut State Legislature from Oxford in 1825 and served several terms.

In his will he bequeathed to Yale College "all my homestead farm where I now live, with its buildings and appurtenances; also all the land that was given to me by my grandfather, Thomas Clark Esq. on the east side of the road that runs north and south of Mr. Samuel Tucker, with its buildings and appurtenances, also all my land that lies north of the road that runs by where George Drake now lives; also my meadow that lies a few rods west of Rimmon School-house and also all my Red Oak farm. etc.

Funds being so liable to be lost by bad security, it is my will, that the lands I have given to said Corporation shall never be sold, but that they shall be let or rented, in such way or manner, as the President and Fellows of said Yale College, and their successors, forever, shall judge to be for the best interest of said institution." He then added this significant provision, "But no part of said donation or income shall ever be appropriated to erect or repair buildings" In other words, he wanted to be sure that his money should be used strictly for fostering and supplying the education of which he had been deprived. The will then continues: "I also give and bequeath to the Corporation of Yale College in New Haven all the money I shall have on hand and all notes I shall have due me at the time of my decease (except three hundred and thirty-four dollars for Chestnut Tree school district) to be appropriated for the benefit of said Yale College, as its President

and Fellows, and their successors forever, shall think shall be for its best good and the most conducive to its prosperity and honor”

He died April 11, 1840 from injuries received by a fall from a scaffolding in his barn. Under his extreme sufferings not a word escaped him as to his future prospects; he remarked only, that he had endeavored to do all the good in his power. He is buried in “a secluded burying ground, which he had been instrumental in arranging on a quiet and beautiful plain, shaded by pines and watered by the murmuring current of a branch of the Housatonic. A neat marble slab records his name as a “distinguished benefactor of Yale College”. Such indeed he was. His benefactions to the institution, included the funded interest that had accumulated to the time of his death amounting to full thirty thousand dollars; three times as much as any other individual had ever given.

This object was not accomplished without a long course of stern self-denial; with great industry and severe economy. The plain farmer’s house remained as it was and its furniture was of the humblest kind. But a warm welcome was given there to his friends and to strangers. His policy was to augment his productive capital, keeping his money always at work, loaning all the cash he did not need for his simple personal wants. His hoarding was not for himself, but to furnish the means of a superior education to the children of others, and to generations yet unborn. He died, unmarried.

JUDGE NATHAN WILCOXSON

Nathan J. Wilcoxson was born May 12, 1796. He married Anna Blackman who died in 1870 aged 73, and for his second wife M. Louise McEwen. She was forty years old in 1870 and Mr. Wilcoxson 74. He had a daughter, Frances by his first wife in 1831. She married Egbert J. Warner. “The History of Derby” says that “Nathan J. Wilcoxson came to Oxford Nov. 30, 1825” It does not say from whence he came. There was a Josiah Wilcoxson, son of John and Ann Wilcoxson who was baptized in the Oxford Congregational Church Dec. 20, 1778 and who in 1825 was 47 years old. He may have been related. “Mr. Wilcoxson immediately engaged (1825) in teaching in the Oxford Public School, where he continued one year. He was then engaged as a teacher of a select school in the same village (Oxford) in which he continued two years. (This may have been the “Academy” on Academy Road.)

Oxford according to Rockey became a separate probate district in 1842, and Nathan Wilcoxson was the first judge, also from 1850 to 1866. He was Town Clerk for a number of years. On an insert map of Oxford Center included in a map of Naugatuck, page 44 of an atlas of New Haven County, published in 1868, his house is shown on the

west side of the Green, opposite the house of H. Lum on the east side of the Green. (Lum's house being the third house south of Academy Road.) Wilcoxson's house may have been at this same location as early as 1834, in as much as in that year one of the suggested locations for the new St. Peter's Church (Episcopal) was "just below the bridge of Mr. Wm. (There is a conflict about the date of the incorporation of Oxford as a Probate District; Rockey gives 1842 and Sharpe in "Seymour Past and Present" gives 1846.)

At the Centennial Celebration held in Oxford, July 4th, 1876, Judge Wilcoxson read an "Historical Sketch of Oxford" at which time he was 80 years old. From this address much material has been obtained for the present history.

DAVID J. McEWEN

David J. McEwen was the son of David McEwen who settled in Oxford and filled a number of offices of responsibility and trust in the town. He was master of Morning Star Lodge, F, and A.M. for four years. He died in 1842. His son David lived on Hog's Back Road on the plateau between Oxford Center and Quaker Farms. From 1846 to 1860, he kept there a boarding school for boys, and it is said that many men remembered with gratitude the kindly instruction and the New England training they received there. He was married March 16, 1829 to Frances Jane Wooster of Litchfield. He was Republican and a Methodist. He is said to have been the soul of integrity and principle and that his judgment in the affairs of the town was honored by his fellow citizens.

ALFRED HARGER

Alfred Harger was a descendant of Jabez Harger (1st) of Stratford, Connecticut who married Margaret Tomlinson of that town in 1662. Alfred was the son of Elijah and Sarah Ruth Lattin Harger, and was baptized in 1804. He married Maria Ruth Beardsley. Their son John married Sarah Delight Fairchild. John and Sarah's son Edgar Burton Harger married Olivette E. Platt, and their children of the present generation are Mrs. Beatrice Sellner, Mrs. Ruth Joy, Mr. Nelson Harger, and Mr. Alfred Platt Harger. They have preserved the diaries of Alfred, son of Elijah, which start July 4, 1828 and carry on until 1863. While they are but a "line a day" record of his personal activities, they nevertheless give a quite vivid account of the daily life of a small farmer of that day with its round of ploughing, sowing, tilling, and harvesting. And here and there a line stands out which casts special light on the unusual part of his existence. Thus in 1828, one

day he "rent shingles" (meaning he split them) for his new house on Quaker Farms Road. Another day he drew logs to the North mill, and "visited schools".)It was the business of the school visitor to examine the children by asking them questions, and he therefore had to have a reasonable education himself). One day he went to Bridgeport to "General Training" (military, of course) and "Bishop Brownell visited the Farms". When he was sick with a cold, he had several visits from Dr. Stoddard, who came all the way from "the Ville" (as he usually styled Humphreysville) either on horseback or in his "shay". In 1829, he "went a sleighing with B. Candee", and carted logs to Nichol's mill. One curious item reads "Celebrated St. Johns, Humphreysville", but gives no clue as to what the celebration was. He carried wool to Newtown, made cider and "set bushes and trees around the house" and a few days later "laid walls and set maple trees". Today they are still sturdy. On the last day of 1829, he "made ox-bows".

In March 1830, he "worked at the chimney" of his new house from March 12 to July 19th, carting brick from Gunntown and from Lemman Clarke's, and lime from Polaski Chatfields. Busy though he was on the chimney, he found time one day to go "a claming to Long Beach with D. Oatman." Through August he worked at the new house "carting 500 ft. of lining boards from B. Lum's saw mill, sand from A. Bates, and more lime from P. Chatfield." Then he "mixed mortar." and the next day he started in "lathing in" the new house, borrowing 204 ft. of lath from Saml Wooster. Then from Sep 5th to Sep 15th, on and off, Oatman "plastered in" the new house. And finally on Oct 11, 1830 he records with Spartan brevity "Moved in to the new house". There was apparently no time for celebration or house warming for the very next day he records "picked corn."

In 1831, he drew logs to Jordan saw mill and Sherman's mill. He must have prospered sufficiently to buy a clock, for on Apr 1st he records "Set up the clock". In October, he spent three days "painting on the church" (Christ Church, Quaker Farms?)

Then a great event is recorded on Sep 3, 1832, when he "Bought a cook stove at New Haven for \$33 1/4". Gone was the day of cooking at an open fireplace!

But the home was still the place of small manufacturing activities, for he states on Feb 11, 1833, "Made brooms etc.". In the summer of 1833, he found time to go "claming" at Long Beach, and then came an event which probably was told and retold throughout the ensuing years, "Went to New Haven, -saw General Jackson," the President of the United States and a great national military hero. Later in the same year, he "bought a stove for father for \$24 $\frac{87}{100}$," and the next day, he set it up and presumably another fireplace was closed up.

On Jan 1, 1834, he "attended a temperance meeting at the Baptist

meeting house." He does not state where this was located.

On Sep 8th of the same year, he recorded "Caravan of Animals at Oxford" (These Caravans were the forerunners of the Circuses).

The first record of his undertaking any surveying is on Sep 22, 1837, when he surveyed land for some estate the name of which is obliterated. According to his descendants, he learned surveying from his father-in-law, Lemuel Beardsley. From then on, his time was, in increasing measure, taken up with surveying, assisting in distribution of estates and other public matters. At this time he was about thirty four years old, and he soon became the leading surveyor in this district.

His mother died March 5, 1841 and on the 8th he "divided the things at the old house." On June 26th he carried a load of bark to Oxford Center, probably to some tannery there, and brought home 12 bushels of ashes, i.e. wood ashes for fertilizing his corn, for in another place in his diary he speaks of "ashing the corn." And three days after bringing home the ashes, he records "harrowed the corn with the cultivator."

On Sep 1st, 1841, he went to the installation of the Rev. Mr. Topliff as pastor of the Oxford Congregational Church.

By 1848, his public activities included membership in the General Assembly of the state, as on May 3d, he records, "At the General Assembly in New Haven. On May 8th he took his son Charles with him to New Haven and on May 11th they "came home from New Haven on foot."

Aug. 15th he went to Derby to see a vessel launched.

An interesting item is recorded in 1862, "Bought at Derby \$400 worth of U.S. 7 3/10 per cent bonds."

His record of his farming activities during 1830 is so detailed that it seems of interest to put all the purely farming entries together, and eliminate the non-farming items, so as to give a picture of what farming meant at that time, with the result as follows:

March 15th	Ploughed
April 8th	Ploughed for oats and sowed them April 10th
April 17th	Second ploughing and sowing of oats
April 19th & 20th	Carted manure
April 28th	Carted manure and Apr. 29th ploughed for corn
May 7th & 8th	Planted corn
May 10th	Harrowed and ploughed for potatoes. Planted them May 13 & 15
May 24th	Washed sheep
May 26th & 27th	Hoed corn
June 3d	Sheared sheep
June 4th	Hoed corn
June 10th	"Ashed" the Corn

June 11th	Ploughed fallow
June 17th	Ploughed for buckwheat
June 19th	Hoed corn
July 22d	Haying, very warm
July 24th	Turned the yearling heifers into L. Candee's lot
July 27th	Cradled oats and next day took them up
July 30th, 31st, Aug 2,	worked at hay and oats
Aug. 3d, 4th, 5th	Worked at hay in the lower meadow.
Aug. 9th, 10th	Worked at hay, Aug. 12, finished haying.
Aug. 29th, 30th	Ploughed fallow
Sep 2d, 3d	Sowed rye
Sep 5th	Took the heifers out of L. Candee's pasture
Sep 10th	Worked at the fallow. Finished sowing rye
Sep 16th	Dug potatoes
Sep 17th, 18th	Cut stalks
Sep 20th	Dug potatoes
Sep 21st, 22d	Dug potatoes
Sep 25th	Dug potatoes and finished Sep 27th
Oct 1st, 2d & 4th	Cut buckwheat
Oct 8th	Threshed buckwheat
Oct 12th	Threshed buckwheat
Oct 15th	Cleaned up buckwheat
Oct 18th	Picked corn
Oct 22d	Made cider at L. Candee's.
Oct 26th to 30th	Picked corn
Nov. 1	Carted manure
Dec 8th	Killed hogs
Dec 10th, 11th, 13th	Threshed oats
Dec. 14th	Threshed rye
Dec 25th	Threshed rye (No holiday!)
Dec 27th and 28th	Threshed Rye

COL. JOHN DAVIS.

Col. John Davis was born in 1755, son of Capt. Joseph and Mary Wheeler Davis, who lived on Chestnut Tree Hill in Oxford. He was descended from the John Davis who located in Derby between 1685 and 1690 and who was known as "The Welshman". As a young man, twenty-two years old, in 1777, he took the oath provided by law for freemen. In 1782 he married Mehitable Thomas of New Haven, by whom he had fourteen children, all born in the same house on Chestnut Tree Hill.

A descendant of his, Mrs. Lily Davis Hull wrote in an article read at a Davis Family Reunion, that "when the War of the Revolution broke out, he was in his early manhood. Whether he sympathized with the

patriot cause or was loyal to the king for conscientious reasons, I do not know, but while the British occupied New York, they sent a body of troops all through southwestern Connecticut and forcibly carried off all the young men they could capture, hoping in this way to prevent them entering the rebel army, and also to induce them to join the British. John Davis was among that number and was held prisoner for some time, but finally escaped and found his way home."

At the time that the Oxford Green was laid out, (during the years between the inception of the Town idea in 1789 and its final incorporation in 1798), Capt. John Davis, (later Colonel), was a member of the committee who got the people to turn out and clear the ground which was full of brambles.

Col. Davis was active in the affairs of the Connecticut State Militia, attaining the rank of Lt. Colonel of the Connecticut 32d. Regiment, Infantry.

When 55 years old, he wrote the following letter to his son, telling of his many activities during the day,-

Anson Davis

Perth Amboy, New Gerzy on the turnpike rode

Oxford August 11th. 1810

Dear Sone, I recd your letter of July 25th with its contents which was well acsepted of

your Mother has bin unwell for Eight weaks past but is now in a cumfortable helth She had a Daughter Born the 4th of July at two o'clock A.M.

I eat brakefast at three and by a pertickerler Request from Col. Umphrey, I attended him at 7 o'clock at New haven I asisted in bilding a house taking the timber from the stump, hued, fraimnd, Raisd Covered Painted with doors & winds by three o'clock in the afternoon. Refreshed with many other things too numerous to mention

Returned home before nine at night. thus ended the memorable fourth of July. Naby is unwell the rest of us is well I have had a quite hard summers work I got my harvest in well & in good season we have had a hard time to git hay ----- got cheefly threw without much damage your cattle & sheepe are doing well Truman has got his hay well & in good season Truman and John has asisted me some in gitting my harvest & hay Your Mother has begun to spin your wool & calcolates to make you a fine piece of cloth. On the 8th instant I attended a brigade meeting at Branford the 32d.Regmt is to be Revued at Milford on the 24th of September Capt Ira Smith & Capt. Wm. Fenn is appointed Major to Said Regiment Capt Philo Beecher has got discharge from millitary duty & will lead the company to the choice of a captain and such other officers as may bee found wonting on the first munday of Sept next at which time your company would be well

accepted of if convenient to attend whilst my pen was in my hand
I recd the news that Trumans wife had got a dafter & doing well

Your Mother Brothers and sisters Remember their Love &c.

John Davis

During his lifetime one of the principal money making projects was raising beef cattle which were sold to drovers for the New York market, and Col Davis was active in this work.

He retained his faculties to a remarkable degree to the day of his death in 1848, aged ninety-three. When he was 90 years old, he broke a colt and rode him from Oxford to New Haven, a distance of some 12 or 15 miles. In the summer before he was 93, he went out with the men and mowed grass nearly all the forenoon. He died shortly after his house was burned, from a fall from his horse and over exertion at the fire. He was a man much respected in and about Oxford for his sterling qualities, both as a citizen and neighbor.

LUGRAND SHARPE

Lugrand Sharpe's father, Thomas Sharpe, came to Oxford from Ridgefield, Conn. where Lugrand was born in 1797. The Sharpe land was in Quaker Farms near Zoar Bridge. The father died there in 1805 when his son was only eight years old. In 1823, Lugrand married a daughter of Ebenezer Booth who "had a house, dam and factory half a mile west of Southford." Two years before, Lugrand had purchased a place in Southford just across the border from Oxford. He constructed a water works and factory south-west of Southford which was later used for the manufacture of cutlery.

"He was an earnest and efficient laborer in the Methodist Society formed in Southford, and it was to a great extent due to his efforts that a Union Meeting House was soon built in Southford". It is likely that some of the nearby Oxford people attended this church. Mr. Sharpe formed a Methodist "class" at Quaker Farms, of which he was the first leader. The Methodist preachers were mostly all "circuit riders", i.e. they were not located in one place, but divided their time between a number of places. It usually required from four to five weeks to make the circuit of them, and to carry on while he was not there, the preacher established, in likely places, what were known as "classes", over which he appointed "class leaders", of which Mr. Sharpe was one.

In 1843, he left Southford and went to Humphreysville to live, and where his son Wm. C. Sharpe was born who founded the "Seymour Record" in 1871.

CHARLES A. DAVIS

One of the prominent Oxford men of a later date was Charles A. Davis who was born in 1858, son of Anson Riley Davis and Mary Alling Davis, in the old Skeel family residence on Bowers Hill Road in Quaker Farms, opposite Good Hill Road. He was a great grandson of Col. John Davis of whom we have already heard, and a great-greatgrandson of Capt. Joseph Davis who was active in the founding of St. Peter's Church in 1764. Anson Riley Davis "followed farming all his life, and his son Charles A. Davis was reared in much the same manner as all farmer boys of his day and early acquired an excellent knowledge of all the duties that fall to the lot of the agriculturalist. He assisted in the operation of the home farm until his father's death in 1885. The next year he married Mrs. Mary Lum widow of Harpin A. Lum. Her daughter, Miss J. Mabel Lum became one of the most respected and influential citizens of Oxford.

In the Spring of 1899, Mr. Davis purchased the place of Stephen Mallett, containing some 260 acres of land and engaged extensively in the dairy business and general farming. His house is on the west side of Quaker Farms Road directly opposite Christ Church. "He was one of the most enterprising and successful dairymen and farmers of Oxford, and as a citizen, stood high in the esteem of his fellow men. His strict integrity and honorable dealing in business commended him to the confidence of all; his pleasant manner won him many friends and he was one of the popular and honored citizens of his community."

In 1894, Mr. Davis was elected Parish Clerk and Treasurer of Christ Church, Quaker Farms, positions which he held until 1910 when he became Senior Warden, continuing as such until his death in 1937. In addition to his activities as farmer and church leader, Mr. Davis became something of a private local banker, loaning money to individuals and to the Town of Oxford before The Town got its first bank loan from the Valley National Bank of Seymour, in 1903.

CHAPTER 18

STEAMBOATS AND RAILROADS

The first use of steam for transportation was on boats. While of course, neither sailing vessels nor steamboats could come up the rivers as far as Oxford, they could come to Derby, which was near enough so that the arrival of the first steamboat in Derby must have caused some excitement in Oxford. This was in the summer of 1824, seventeen years after the memorable trip up the Hudson River in 1807, by Robert Fulton's "Clermont". The name of the boat coming to Derby was the "General Lafayette"; a small vessel built with a mast and a bowsprit, and propelled by side paddle wheels. It was owned by a company in New York, who planned to run it regularly between that city and Derby. Thousands of people came to see it steam up to Derby and surely some of the people of Oxford must have ridden or walked down to Derby for such a sight. Opposition to the plan to have it run regularly to Derby developed in Bridgeport and the boat was purchased by persons there, presumably to have it run to Bridgeport instead of to Derby. Other attempts were made to furnish steamboat transportation between Derby and New York, eight vessels, at one time or another plying between the two places as late as 1879.

Sailing vessels continued well after the coming of the "Gen. Lafayette", it being recorded that in 1838, packets of 80 tons plied weekly between Derby and New York, carrying wood and ship timber, the river having about ten feet of water at Derby landing.

It was twelve years after the advent of the "Gen. Lafayette" in 1824, before the first railroad came to the neighborhood of Oxford. This was the Housatonic Railroad, which ran along the west bank of the Housatonic River. It was designed to provide an all-year-round route between New York and Albany in connection with Long Island Steamboats from New York to Bridgeport. It was chartered in 1836, the company being authorized to build a railroad from the north line of Connecticut, near Canaan, down the valley of the Housatonic River to Brookfield, (and Stevenson) to Bridgeport. It was opened in 1840.

How much use the people of Oxford made of this railroad is not on record, but there was a station at Stevenson, which they reached by driving down the Old Mill Road (now known as Barry Road) in Quaker Farms, past the old mill at Eight Mile Brook, then up Bowers Hill Road to what is now Freeman Road, down that road to the road on the east bank of the Housatonic River, and north on that to Zoar Bridge.

On the eastern side of town, the Naugatuck Railroad, running along the Naugatuck River, was not opened to Seymour and Naugatuck until 1849. It is significant that this date coincides closely with the drying up of the local industries, caused by the railroad bringing coal to the towns along the Housatonic River, thus providing for steam power much greater than the local water powers.

The Naugatuck Railroad was not planned as part of any through route but was intended merely to provide a rail outlet especially for the thriving manufacturing towns of Winsted and Waterbury. For the people of Oxford, it provided a shipping and receiving point at Seymour which was considerably nearer than Derby or New Haven, to which, previously, they had had to travel laboriously by wagon, and it was undoubtedly made immediate use of by them in 1849.

To show the character of service which this road gave the people of the Valley at the height of its traffic, we give below its timetable of June, 1871.

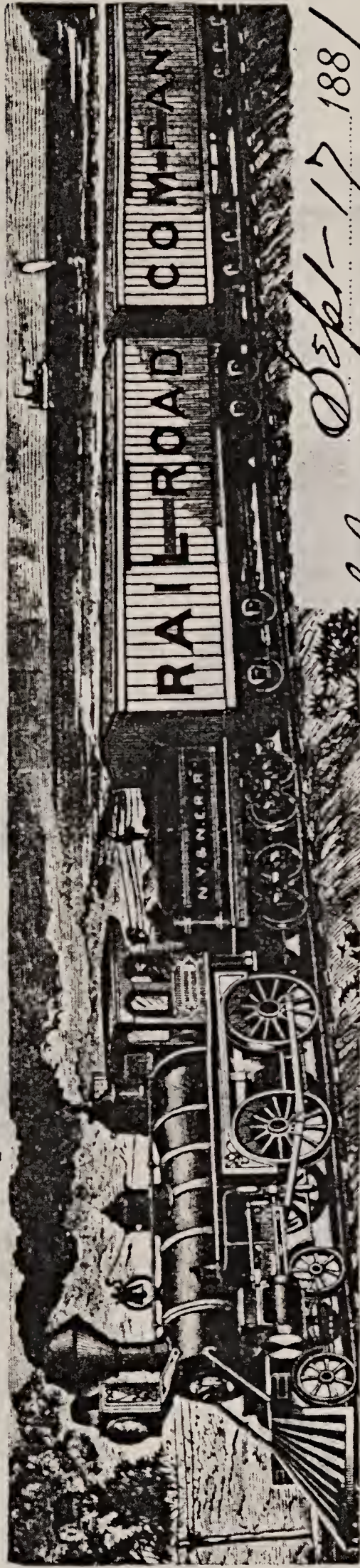
Trains leaving Seymour as follows:

	Going South
5:50 A.M.	Freight train with passenger car.
8:53 A.M.	Passenger train
11:17 A.M.	Freight train with passenger car.
1:28 P.M.	Special
3:51 P.M.	Passenger train
6:36 P.M.	Milk train with Passenger Car.
	Going North
8:53 A.M.	Milk train with Passenger Car
11:17 A.M.	Passenger Train
1:28 P.M.	Freight Train with Passenger Car.
4:26 P.M.	Freight Train with Passenger Car.
6:10 P.M.	Passenger Train
8:00 P.M.	Special

The New England Railroad

The railroad which ran east and west through the northern part of Oxford was known from 1895 on as the "New England Railroad". It was originally part of an ambitious scheme to provide a through over-land route between Providence, R.I. and the Hudson River, and was named the "Hartford, Providence, and Fishkill Railroad" It was opened from Hartford to Bristol, Conn. in 1850 and was extended to Waterbury in 1855. West of Waterbury, the first survey was made in the Fall of 1845, but no application to take land was made until 1868, when it was made in the name of the "Boston, Hartford and Erie Railroad." It is shown on the 1868 map of Oxford under that name. Work was commenced west of Waterbury in November of 1869, and continued till 1870, when work was suspended with about three quarters

New York & New England



Sept-17 1881

MARKS AND NUMBERS.

Received of *M. H. J. Calver*

Meigs & Frost — *24 Bbls Butter*
A. C. Barron — *3 Cases Bottles*

Numbered and marked as above, which the Company promises to forward by its Railroad, and deliver to

or order, at its Depot in

Watbury

he or they first paying freight for the same, at the rate customary per ton of 2,000 pounds.

N. B.—If merchandise be not called for on its arrival,

it will be stored at the risk and expense of the owner.

E. D. Smith

For the Corporation.

Way Bill, N. Y. and New England R.R.



Towantic Station on Riggs St.

of the road bed completed. Work was resumed in 1880 by a new company, the "New York and New England Railroad." It was opened for travel from Waterbury through Oxford and Danbury to Brewster, N. Y. in 1881 and to the Hudson River in 1882, at Fishkill Landing (now "Beacon"), from whence trains were ferried across the River to Newburg. At Hawleyville the road connected with the Housatonic Railroad.

After several re-organizations, the road became known in 1873, as the "New York and New England Railroad" and in 1895 as the "New England Railroad".

The accompanying illustration is a reproduction of a waybill of the "New York and New England Railroad", dated Sep 17, 1881, in which year the railroad was extended to Brewster. The waybill from H. J. Oatman of Southbury is addressed to Meigs and Frost, who were makers of crackers in Waterbury.

Another illustration is that of the railroad station at the north end of Riggs St., Oxford, known as the "Toantic" station. The station known as "Oxford" was located in Southford at the Oxford Turnpike. The railroad between Waterbury and Southbury was abandoned about 1938, and between Southbury and Hawleyville about 1949.

While the people of Oxford enjoyed the use of the Naugatuck Railroad from 1849 on, it was not until 1881 that the New England Railroad provided them with other outlets, at the northern part of the town, the one by connection with the Housatonic Railroad on the west, and the other with the Naugatuck Railroad on the east.

The New Haven and Derby Railroad

In the meantime, a railroad was opened directly from Derby to New Haven, known as the "New Haven and Derby Railroad" in 1871. This gave the people of Oxford a direct all-rail route from Seymour to New Haven without having to journey down to Devon.

In the Sep 1, 1871 issue of the "Seymour Record" it was noted that "the Derby and New Haven Railroad is now fairly under way and making four regular trips between Ansonia and New Haven. Arrangements have been made with the Naugatuck Railroad, so that passengers can change cars at Ansonia.

CHAPTER 19

CUSTOMS AND AMUSEMENTS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

From its settlement in 1680 down to the end of the first quarter of the 19th. century, Oxford's life was bound up in agriculture, and "all the social habits and traditions of the people were those of English country life, and while in theory they recognized the equality of men before God, they honored the magistrates and the clergy as being the ministers of His word and power, and, by habit, education and fixed principle, they regarded the aged, dignified, well-born and wealthy among their neighbors with a reverence and awe, of which people of this age know practically nothing. The courtesy of the present time is the courtesy of equals. Theirs was nothing of the kind. Men in office magnified their office, and demanded, and if necessary, compelled respect." We have already touched on this in connection with titles of respect awarded to some, and in the seating of the meeting house in early days. Another writer telling of reminiscences (dating back to 1820) in Derby, says of Saturday and Sunday, - "The evening of Saturday was considered as holy time, and when it began to be dark, secular cares were laid aside. The plays for the week were ended, the play-things were put aside. All labor in the field ceased.

"But the moment the sun set behind the western hills on Sunday, that moment the holy day was closed, and play might be resumed. The farmer would then, if necessary, grind his scythe preparatory to early morning Monday mowing. The young people might assemble for sport and lovers in their neat Sabbath dress might lawfully meet and build together their airy castles for some future happy day."

Strange as it may seem to to-day's readers, one of the chief social events in early days was going to church, or as they called it, "going to meeting". Each family was so isolated on its farm that there was but little contact with other people during the week, and on Sunday people put on their best clothes, partly no doubt because of the sacredness of the day, but equally likely they knew they would meet all their neighbors, and felt the desirability of "putting their best foot forward". And as they all stayed for afternoon as well as morning service, luncheon time in the "Sabbath Day House" or the houses of hospitable neighbors, gave an opportunity for friendly chat and probably a bit of gossip, all forming a welcome break from the monotony of farm life. Moreover, church service gave nearly their only chance for

intellectual stimulus, by listening to the preacher's sermon and discussing it afterwards. So "going to meeting" was a great social event.

It also provided a means for the people to hear a little music, and to do some singing themselves. It seems strange how people were completely cut off from music save that which they heard at meeting and that was almost indescribably limited. Hymns such as are common now in all churches were unknown, and all that they had were metrical versions of the psalms. And these were all fitted, it is said to some five tunes, regardless of metre. These tunes were, "Old Hundred", "York", "Hackney", "Windsor", and "Martyrs", none of which, save "Old Hundred" is in much use to-day. The tunes were all rendered "by heart" without the aid of written or printed music, but the music was kept under some control by the scheme of having one designated person sing one line of the psalm by himself, followed by the repetition of the line by the entire congregation. In the Congregational church, this person was either a deacon or a man appointed to act as "correstor". The same system was followed in St. Peter's Episcopal Church in Oxford.

Later came the hymns of Dr. Isaac Watts which became very popular in the early part of the eighteenth century, such as "Joy to the World", "Am I a soldier of the cross" etc., and became more in use by the end of that century. The "New England Psalm singer" by William Billings was published in 1770, and his "Chorister's Companion" a music book based on the "Mi, Fa, Sol" system made many people dissatisfied with the old method of singing and they wanted to adopt the new way. As early as 1734, in the neighborhood of Oxford, namely in Woodbury, the Congregational Church there was beginning to consider "singing in the new way". Just when the change came in the Oxford churches, from a chorister leading the congregation, line by line, to a choir singing from written music, is uncertain, but in St. Peter's Episcopal Church, it probably occurred in 1800, as in that year five choristers were chosen, the large number seeming to indicate that they constituted a choir which probably used written music. By this time the music books published by Wm. Billings had been in general use for some years throughout New England. He introduced the pitch pipe into congregational singing, bringing more order even into the "line by line" singing. In 1764, the Congregational Church voted to introduce Dr. Watt's version of the psalms "to be sung in the congregation of this Society on the Lord's Day".

The use of musical instruments in church was bitterly opposed by the authorities, but gradually the "bass viol," as it was called (but probably a cello) was introduced. The violin, or fiddle, was particularly in disfavor, because it was used for dancing and therefore considered worldly and unfit for use in God's house. The objection to the use of the violin, flutes, hautboys, clarinets and bassoons in church presupposes that they were in general use for secular gatherings such as "muster day" of the trainbands.

In St. Peter's Church, a "bass viol" remained in the possession of the church as late as 1854 as it was then ordered to be sold. Whether they had obtained an organ before that time is not clear, but it is known that they were considering the purchase of one in 1810.

At a meeting of St. Peter's Church in 1835 it was voted that "the singers be permitted to use their seats in the new church for singing on Sunday evenings". As we have already pointed out, the Connecticut "sabbath" ended at sundown on Sunday and it may be that the singers were, by this action, given permission to sing some secular songs. By the middle of the eighteenth century, singing schools were springing up throughout New England, but we can only surmise that there may have been one in Oxford. Surely some of the old English ballads were handed down from father to son or more likely from mother to daughter. But there is no record of what happened in this respect in Oxford.

"House Raising" (which in the growing community of Oxford in the early days must have happened fairly frequently) was a social event to which the neighbors flocked. It was a process which required the concerted effort of several men, especially when the structure was a high one such as a barn or meeting house. In the "framed construction" of those days, each wall frame was put together lying flat on the ground, and then raised into position. Each wall frame, or "bent" as it was called, consisted of the "floor sill", the middle beam, or "girt" (if the structure were tall enough to require it) and the top beam, or "plate", together with the corner posts, all carefully morticed and tenoned together. The bent (flat on the ground as we have said), laid with the sill resting on the stone foundation of the building, and the plate on a timber. Picked men stood at the foot of the posts, armed with crow-bars and broadaxes to keep these uprights in their places, and on the steadiness of these men depended the safety of those who raised the bent and who had to stand directly under the timber they were lifting. At a given signal, men raised the plate from the timber on which it lay, and others placed short pieces of scantling under it. A second lift carried it as high as the mens' heads, where it again rested on pieces of scantling. The next lift was made with pike poles. Short poles were first got under the bent, lifting it so that it stood at an angle of some fifteen degrees with the plane of the building, which carried all but the posts beyond the reach of hands. The next, and final lift was made with long pike poles, until the bent stood perpendicular.

A house raising was a sort of celebration, and old account books show that one of the biggest items of cost was for rum for the raisers. And except for church going, most gatherings were apt to end in drunkenness. Rum of course was expensive, being imported, and the commonly used spirituous liquor was cider brandy, distilled from apple cider.

During the summer, both men and women were so busy on the farms

that there was little time for recreation, but during the winter there was more time for amusements, such as coasting and skating outdoors, and games and "bees" indoors. And by 1795, dancing seems to have had some place in Oxford, for around that year Josiah Washband enlarged the "Washband Tavern", including, amongst other improvements, a large ball room upstairs, which presumably was used by the Oxford people.

By the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, festivities in private houses became more common. One of these houses was the old Twitchell residence on Academy Road in Oxford Center. It was purchased by Enos Candee in 1845, and during his lifetime the place became one of the famous houses of Oxford. He is said to have "arranged the parlors in charming style and that they were the scene of many festivities, culminating in the weddings of his daughters". The Rev. Mr. Peck, in his account of the house says "David Candee told me many pleasant details of the home life of this large family, of the Thanksgiving feasts when all were gathered around the home hearthstone".

In the Nov. 1st. 1871 issue of the "Seymour Record", an account is given of a concert in Oxford, - "The concert by Mr. Walker's Singing Class on Wednesday Evening Oct. 25 gave unusual satisfaction".

By 1863, the annual fair of the "Oxford Agricultural Society" had started, providing a great annual event of interest and amusement. The "Premium List" of the Twelfth Annual Show and Fair held Oct. 13, 1875 gives some clue to what some of the amusements were at that date. A more extended account of the fair and its prizes will be given later.

The "Seymour Record" of March 29, 1894 tells of an entertainment given by the Sunday School of Christ Church, Quaker Farms held March 27th., -

"The entertainment was well attended and an enjoyable affair, and everyone thought the 10 cents admission at the door was none too much for the pleasures of the evening." It included a tableau, "the Spinning Wheel", numerous recitations, some sentimental, some comic, and singing by the choir. A recitation was also given by Miss Fairchild's school". (Miss Fairchild was at that time the teacher in the Bowers Hill school in Quaker Farms).

Donation Parties.

After the Civil War, the churches had difficulty in keeping their doors open. The population of Oxford was on the decline, falling from a maximum of 1763 in the year 1830 when things were booming, to its minimum of 902 in 1890. Coupled with this loss of church members, no systematic way had had been adopted of supplying the necessary funds for paying the minister's salary, to take the place of the old direct taxation. To help out, it became quite customary for country

Donation Visit.

Mr. General Harbison
Sir:

*The company of yourself
 and friends is respectfully invited to
 attend the regular*

Annual Donation Visit,
*for Rev. Clayton Eddy, at the residence
 of*

Marcus Hyde, Esq.,

Quaker Farms,

TUESDAY EVENING, FEB. 7, 1871.

A Good Entertainment Provided.

N. B. If stormy, next fair evening.

churches to pay part of the minister's salary "in kind", and the actual delivery of the gifts was often made at so-called "Donation Parties". The illustration herewith is copied from a printed invitation to such a "donation party", here termed "Annual Donation Visit". It was held on Feb. 7, 1871 at the residence of Marcus Hyde, Esq. (on the west side of Quaker Farms Road, and at the southwest corner of what is now "Tilquist Road."). It was given for the benefit of the Rev. Clayton Eddy who had been rector of Christ Episcopal Church in Quaker Farms since some time in 1869, before which time there had been no minister there for a couple of years, so, obviously, Mr. Eddy needed help. Nevertheless the occasions of these donation parties were made real "parties", and as the old newspapers used to read "a good time was had by all". Apparently, in the case of Mr. Eddy, the term "Annual Visit" was but mere "wishful thinking", for the church was vacant for a year after Mr. Eddy left, and the salary of his successor was but \$225.00.

The weekly bath of the Nineties.

With the plentiful supply of water which most people now have, piped into their houses, from wells or springs, and pumped by electric pumps automatically controlled, it is hard sometimes for people to realize what a blessing such a supply is. In a "Memoranda" book commenced Sep. 21st. 1890, one prosperous farmer in Oxford records as an important event the weekly filling of the bathtub. The bath tub was of course a portable wooden tub set on the kitchen floor before the fireplace or range, filled with hot water from kettles, previously supplied from the well, either by hoisting up a bucket or by a hand pump. And this man counted it so much of an event that he wrote it in big capital letters. Thus he writes, "Sunday Oct. 26, 1890, I filled the bath tub and Della, Arthur and myself took a bath". "Sunday Nov. 2d. 1890, Filled bath tub for all." This was apparently done in the early morning, for he adds, "Katie and Della went to church". Then cold weather seems to have made weekly bathing too unattractive, for his next entry of filling the bath tub was not until Dec. 18th., again a Sunday. Then Sunday Jan. 25th. 1891, "Filled the bath tub and all except Katie took a bath". Feb. 1st. he "filled the bath tub". Again on Sunday Feb. 8th. he "filled the bath tub", this time apparently in the evening, for he first reports of his doings during the morning and afternoon.

All of these entries, and many others like them indicate that it was an event to have a bath in the winter, and there is no doubt that this was representative of farm life in the nineties. And one wonders, did one filling of the tub do for all the family?

CHAPTER 20

THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT AND COMMUNITY HALL IN QUAKER FARMS

People all over the country at the beginning of the nineteenth century were becoming concerned about the evils of intemperance. The first temperance society in the country was founded in 1808 and for forty years or more, the campaign against drunkenness was carried on by lecturers going around the country depicting the horrible results of intemperance and exhorting their hearers to forsake the habit. By one means or another, men were persuaded to sign a pledge to abstain from intoxicating liquors.

The first concerted effort for temperance in this country seems to have been the so-called "Washingtonian Movement" which had its origin in the reformation of a Baltimore drinking club of six men, brought about by the address of a temperance lecturer. They signed a pledge of total abstinence April 6, 1840. It is said that the society was of great and lasting benefit to the general temperance cause. They were popularly known as "The Washingtonians". Somewhat later, John Bartholomew Gough began his talks on temperance, which he started after a benevolent Quaker persuaded him to take the pledge, (having been a confirmed drunkard) and to attend temperance meetings, at which he became a popular speaker. His influence, coupled with that of Father Matthew (a Roman Catholic priest from Ireland) was instrumental in the formation of the "Independent Order of Good Templars" in Utica, N. Y. in 1851. This was a beneficial order, based on total abstinence, and it spread around the world. Its name was probably derived from that of the "Knights Templars" founded in the 12th. century.

About the time of the formation of the Good Templars, the Roman Catholic Church took a firm stand on the subject of temperance in relation to its youth, requiring them at the time of their confirmation to take an oath not to partake of any spirituous liquor before the age of twenty one. The oath is still required. Many Episcopal clergymen favored the temperance cause as long as it placed the chief emphasis on voluntary abstinence, and they wrote numerous pamphlets on temperance, and several diocesan conventions passed resolutions in favor of the reform, but the idea that even moderate drinking was a sin, seemed to many extravagant. In general, the attitude of the Episcopal Church seems to have been one favoring moderation in drinking, rather than total abstinence.

On Aug. 1st. 1848, John B. Gough made in the Methodist Church in Seymour what is described as a powerful speech on temperance, and about this time "the Humphreysville Total Abstinence Society" was organized, and also the "Daughters of Temperance". In 1854 Connecticut passed an act for the suppression of intemperance, which required that agents for the sale of liquor for chemical and manufacturing purposes should be appointed, and appropriations made by town meetings. All of these things bespoke the extent to which intemperance had grown as an evil requiring concerted action to overcome. One writer expressed the condition throughout New England as follows,—"The indications of intemperance among the farms met the eye at the first glance, in dilapidation and ruin. There were carts without wheels, and all manner of broken tools, cumbering the yards. Fences leaned, and walls were tottering etc." The Good Templars became active in the Quaker Farms section of Oxford, and some time around 1858-60 Mr. Stephen Mallett (a prominent citizen who lived in the house on Quaker Farms Road just opposite Christ Church) erected a building known as "Community Hall", on the southeast corner of Quaker Farms road and Hogs Back Road, for the use of the "Good Templars". Mr. Mallett's plan was that "Community Hall" would provide a gathering place for social activities, where no liquor would be sold or served, thus drawing people away from taverns.

A curious fact is that Mr. Mallett never gave a deed for the land, and made a practice of storing some of his own material in the basement of the building. This he did so as to retain ownership of the land and building, and prevent the Good Templars from using it for objectionable purposes. One of the interesting uses of the building was a series of lectures given in 1896 by George Washington, the colored evangelist.

When Mr. Charles A. Davis acquired the Mallett Farm in 1899, the building and land passed into his ownership, and the building continued to be used for community purposes. In 1905 it burned down and the vestry of Christ Church, Quaker Farms of which Mr. Davis was a member, voted to undertake the Trusteeship of "the property of the Good Templars Association, for the people's good", and to proceed to erect a new building at once. A building committee was appointed consisting of Messrs. Charles B. Johnson, Charles A. Davis and William R. Palmer.

Mr. William R. Palmer was appointed solicitor with Miss Clara Hawkins, Miss J. Mabel Lum, Miss Cora Lum and Mrs. Henry B. Davis, assistants. The money is said to have been subscribed locally, together with some volunteer labor. No deed to the property was obtained. Since that date the Hall has been under the management of the "Ladies Society" (Women's Guild) of Christ Church. The success of "Community Hall", and the gradual elimination of most of the taverns is good evidence of the control of intemperance which gradually took place.

CHAPTER 21

OXFORD MASONIC SOCIETIES

"In the palmy days of Oxford's manufacturing industries, free-masonry flourished here. Morning Star Lodge No. 47, Master Masons was instituted Oct. 18, 1804. The petitioners to whom the charter was granted were Adam Lum, Veren Dike, Silas Sperry, George W. Thomas, Benjamin Candee, Lewis Wakelee, E. C. Candee, Joel Finch, Arnold Loveland, William Hurd, William Bronson, Daniel Candee, Abel Wheeler, Samuel Riggs, William Morris, Levi Candee, Nathan Davis, Charles Monson, Jessie Scott, and Moses Candee. The lodge continued in Oxford until 1848 when it was removed to Humphreysville (as Seymour was then called).

Eureka Chapter No. 22, Royal Arch Masons was instituted in Oxford Oct. 12, 1826 with the following members present, "most of them being members of Morning Star Lodge":

Samuel Wire	Jonah Nettleton	G. Rawson
Chauncey M. Hatch	Ebenezer Fisher	J. Manville
David M. Clark	William Jones	S. Steele
Merritt Bradley	D. Kimberly	Lewis Candee
David Mc Cuen	T. Lee	S. C. Pottaker
Harry Smith	L. Smith	G. Smith
Lyman Riggs	A. Colt	J. Potter
N. Osborne	H. Thomas	

Until 1840 Convocations were held quite regularly, but about this time, business in Oxford began to decline and the various members removed to other towns. Convocations became less frequent and at a meeting held Feb. 29, 1844, it was voted to adjourn until convened by special order of the High Priest; and finally the chapter was removed to Waterbury.

The chapter met in the building known as "Masonic Hall", the architecture of which is of the type known as "Greek Revival" which did not come into use until about 1820, so it would seem that meetings of Morning Star Lodge from 1804 to 1826 when Eureka Chapter was instituted must have been held elsewhere.

After 1848 the building was used for other purposes, but was still known as "Masonic Hall", it being shown as such on the 1868 map of Oxford. Its most recent use has been as a part of the parish house of the Congregational Church. While still standing, as this is being

written, it is said that it is to be demolished. It is located on the church property, just north of Academy Road, its front face lining up with the fronts of the houses on the east side of the Town Green.

CHAPTER 22

THE CIVIL WAR

When the war broke out in 1861, sentiment in Oxford seems to have been somewhat divided, some favoring secession by the Southern States and others being strongly in favor of the Union. It is said that at one time the Confederate flag was hoisted at Oxford Center. Very possibly this was done by or with the sympathy of those "engaged in the Southern trade", and whose business was ruined by the war.

On the other hand, Judge Wilcoxson stated in his 1876 Historical Address that "In 1861, at the breaking out of the Civil War, Oxford's sons proved equal to the emergency. No fewer than seventy-five men entered the loyal army by enlistment, as I, who then kept the record very well know. Of this number, but few, probably not more than five disgraced themselves by desertion."

In the "History of the Old Town of Derby," a list is given of the soldiers furnished by the Town of Oxford, regiment by regiment. We have arranged these names alphabetically and give it later.

A total of 105 names is included, whereas Judge Wilcoxson only speaks of 75, but these may have been only those who volunteered at the outbreak of war.

The population of Oxford in 1860 was 1,269 and in 1870, 1,338 or say approximately 1,300 during the Civil War, 1861-1865. The total of 105 men serving in the war thus amounted to 8.0% of the population.

One of the Oxford people affected by the war was Mary H. Candee Tomlinson, wife of Horace E. Tomlinson. They lived in Quaker Farms in the house still standing at the southwest corner of Quaker Farms Road and O'Neill Road. Mrs. Tomlinson had two brothers who served in the war, Frederick and Andrew Candee. The boys seem to have been very fond of their sister Mary, and wrote her a number of letters from camp, which she and her descendants have carefully preserved. They give a vivid personal account of the life of a young soldier.

Prior to the letters from camp there are three letters of interest. The first is from her sister, Julia M. Candee Bronson, from Hartford, at the time of the firing on Fort Sumter, and gives a vivid description of the excitement in Hartford over this event. How immediate was the effect of the bombardment of that fort is shown by her comment that a regiment of volunteers had already been formed as she wrote, only seventeen days afterwards, and that still other companies were forming.

Then follows a letter from Mary H. Candee Tomlinson's brother, Andrew Candee at Woodbury, stating that there was a company of volunteers there. Twelve days later, a letter from her brother, Andrew at Woodbury, was dated May 25th, 1862.

Some time between that date and August of the same year, Frederick had enlisted. The next letter we have is from Mary Tomlinson's brother, Andrew, dated Feb. 23, 1863 at camp, so some time after May 25, 1862, he also had enlisted. The two brothers were not in the same regiment, but the service of both of them was in Louisiana, at the time of the letters. The letters from Frederick and Andrew give a good picture of what the young Northern soldiers were thinking of some of the "folks at home".

From Julia M. Candee Bronson to her sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson from Hartford, Conn. Apr. 29, 1861.

(Note) Abraham Lincoln had been sworn in to the office of President of the United States on March 4, 1861, and on April 12th, Fort Sumter, was fired on. So this letter was written only seventeen days thereafter. She writes:

"You probably have felt anxiety on account of our country's troubles, but probably less than many who reside in more densely populated places. The excitement here is intense; a regiment of volunteers have been raised here and still other companies are forming. Stars and Stripes are everywhere seen and red, white, and blue rosettes are on almost every passerby. The first Sabbath after the news of the attack upon Fort Sumpter came, extras were issued from the printing offices and ministers and people on their way to church bought and read them. The newsboys sold them on the church steps unrebuked. The second Sabbath, large establishments were employed in making clothing for the soldiers. Many people throughout the city were sewing through the day, and an immense crowd at the depot waiting the arrival of the Massachusetts (missing), and farewells taken amid shouts of the multitude, smiles and tears of parting friends. But God reigns still, let the earth rejoice, and while we tremble we will still hope.

from sister Julia.

May 13, 1861

Andrew Candee writes from Woodbury to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson

"There is a company of volunteers here awaiting orders to go to New Haven under the command of Dr. Beckwith's son, a graduate of West Point".

Woodbury, May 25th, 1862

Andrew Candee writes his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson,

"You wanted to know what I thought of the war now. I think it is a

From Andrew Candee to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson.

Bayou Boeuf, Feb. 17th, 1863

"I am well at present and enjoying myself first rate. We are well situated now on the line of the New Orleans, Opelousas and Great Western R.R. We were first ordered to Berwicks Bay, the terminus of the R.R. and stayed there 4 weeks and were then ordered to guard the R.R. from New Orleans to Berwicks Bay so our regiment is scattered a distance of about 85 miles. Our regiment is very healthy, we having lost but 1 man since we left Conn. the 16th of Nov., a space of 3 months. I have got to be a rank Abolitionist since I have been down here. We are in about as bad a slave section as there is in our country. The settlers are mostly French without a grain of principle---I had the pleasure of seeing Fred; he is looking tough and healthy. I was with him nearly all day, we are stationed only about 20 miles apart"

From your loving brother

A. B. Candee

From Andrew Candee to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson

Bayou Beouf, Feb. 23, 1863

"Fred has left his camp here for Brashear City, only 7 miles from where we are stationed. They went by here yesterday. I am on picket guard today but have plenty of time to write. We have just been paid off and I am going to send home a little money. Our company is very healthy, having but one man in the hospital and he stays there to get rid of duty. He is one of the men that is all the while cursing the abolitionists and niggers. I wish he was at home where he belongs instead of here. We have a great many such men in the 9 months men and they are nothing but a nuisance. That is one of the evils of offering such bounties. When I get home if there is any more such bounties offered, I will raise my voice against it for one."

(The government in July 1861, had given a bounty of \$100. plus regular pay of \$13 a month and in 1863 had more than trebled the bounty)

From Edward Candee a younger brother to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson,

Plattsville, March 8th, 1863

(Note: Plattsville is in Connecticut, on Route 59, between Bridgeport and Easton) "I meant to have come down to see you, but had a good job offered me and thought best to except it. It is at work japaning buttons. I have been here two months now and like it first rate so far, get \$10 per month and board with the chance of staying a year at \$12 per month and board.

I have received a letter from Andrew since I have been here. He was then in New Orleans and had the mumps. He wrote an

account of the voyage, quite a long one too. It seems that they had some pretty high winds and it took them some time to make the voyage but finally arrived safe. Part of the company was left behind in New York and was shipwrecked on an uninhabited island, but they managed to save enough from the wreck to keep them from starvation.

Andrew writes in his last letter that he has spent one day with Fred. The Reg. Fred is in had been with two or three others down the river on an expedition, and on their return encamped near the 23d and they had a pleasant time. Fred seems to think that the nine months men will not have much fighting to do, as he says by the time they get thoroughly drilled, their time will be out. He says the old troop will have to do all the fighting and I am pretty much of his opinion, but just now it don't seem as if there was any more fighting to be done anywhere and if it is to be done, they are not doing it. The secessionists of the north are helping the rebels all they can. It seems as though we had reached the crisis and something must be done."

This was written some two months after Lincoln had issued the Emancipation proclamation on Jan 1st, 1863.

The following is from a letter, the first part of which is missing. It is from Frederick Candee, apparently to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson, written presumably from Louisiana in 1862-63.

"(We) went through hedges and ditches and over fences until we arrived at the Rifle pits, and that is where the fun commenced in good earnest, but we whiped them in about one hour and half fighting. We took one hundred and ninety prisoners and killed and wounded as many more. We lost four killed and fourteen wounded. The Rebels give our Regiment the name of the Blue-hatted Dare Devils. We was the only Regiment that wore them. They said that when powder and Balls could not stop a Regiment that they could not fight them. We have moved down the Bayou about twelve miles and intend to stay till the sugar crop is in, which will be five or six weeks, and then we go back to New Orleans. As for myself my health is good, never better. I like soldiering when we are on the move, but Camp life is the dulest of all lifes.- The drum is beating for me (to) fall in. I am going out with six men to see what I can see and get some chickens.

From Frederick Candee to his sister Mary Candee Tomlinson

Camp Renor, La. March 12th, 1863

"Andrew came up to see me last week, but I had gone on three days Picket and did not see him, but he was well.

There is no news of importance down here in Dixie. All is quiet, so the papers say, but I am sorry to say it has, for if we have got

to Fight, I want to fight every other day till we get through. Report says that Stonewall Jackson is down here and if he is, we shall have a little something to do, and then time will pass pleasantly. Oh for something to drive the dulness of Camp life away. I had rather take my chances in battle than to ly in camp. I must say that our Army has got too many Cowards or men that enlisted for money and are afraid to get into the field of battle. We have got twenty or thirty thousand of those nine months Troops and they are not so good as so many Cornstalks. They don't know anything and have not time to learn. You may think I am hard on these nine months troops, but we have a chance to know what they are. We have got two Green Regiments in the brigade with us and we have to do all the Picket duty. They went out on Picket duty one or twice and they saw a Rebel behind every Stump and Tree and kept the whole Camp in an uproar. We are stationed so that we can see the Rebels Camp fire every night and some nights we shout at one another, that is, the Pickets, but we have not had any one hurt yet. It is a very common thing when we Sargents are going from one post to another to have a Ball whiz past our head, but we will pay them in a few days. I am a going out in a day or two to see if I can find out their numbers and may see some of them."

From Andrew Candee to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson

Bayou DesAllemands March 30th

(From other letters it is evident that this was in 1863)

"I was just getting on the cars to see Fred, when I received your welcome letter. I stayed with him over night and had a very pleasant visit. He is well, and was glad to hear from you. He is at Bayou Boeuff, Gen. Weitzel having withdrawn his troops from Brashear. We are on the R. R. at present. There is another Co. at this station with us. We had a report that 4 Co's. of our Regt. had been surprised at Lafourche (the headquarters of our Regt.) and taken prisoners with all the staff officers, but it proved to be a false alarm given by a man that heard the pickets fire and was so scared that he did not stay to see what was the matter but cut for the next station with the news that they were taken prisoners. His own Co. had out a squad searching for his body as they thought he was drowned.

We lost one of our gun-boats 2 or 3 days ago with Co. A of the 12th C.V. and 1 Co. of the 160th New York. The Captain of the boat went beyond his orders and got himself into a trap. You said you hoped I would not enlist again if I got home safe. I hope you are not discouraged after less than 2 years of war. Our fore-fathers fought 8 years. We should prove ourselves unfit for the trust which was left with us if we surrender the principles of

government which were left with us to maintain. I would much rather be at home, but my place is here for the present. There is a great deal in the conduct of the war that is wrong but that does not alter the merits of the question before the people of this country. I hope you will not hesitate to rebuke treason if you hear it uttered anywhere. When I get home I am ready to fight it there if necessary. Our State by the conduct of her politicians is getting us to be a byword among loyal men everywhere. We see more in the conduct of affairs at home to discourage soldiers in the field than the rebels have ever done or can do."

From Frederick Candee to his sister Mary Candee Tomlinson

Oppelousas, La. April 30th, 1863

"We have had rather lively times down here in Dixie for the last three weeks. We left Brashire City the 11th, April. My Regt. and the 75, N.Y. was in the advance. We came up with the enemy Sunday the 13th about four o'clock in the afternoon and fought until dark when we fell back out of the reach of their Guns. The morning of the 19th we opened fire about seven o'clock and heavy Cannonading until noon when we, that is, the 12th C.V. and 75 N.Y. was ordered to charge the enemy's right. Which you can bet we did. We had been under fire all the forenoon and was glad of a little excitement. On we went untill we came up to one of their Rifle Pits when they opened a murderous fire, of musketry. It was terrible, but on we went and after three hours of close fighting we drove them back of their heavy breastwork. When, at dark, they retreated. We got two thousand prisoners and destroyed four of their gunboats.

Some of the New Regts in our rear broke and run in the fight. The man on my right, fell shot through the shoulders and the one on my left was shot through the head.

Blood flew on me in four or five places, and several balls went through my Cloths, but I escaped unhurt. The rebels had ten thousand and we had fifteen but they had strong earth works. They was only five or six of our Regts under fire but drove them. They have marched one hundred and twenty miles and are near Oppelousas on Picket for a rest, that is if a soldier has any. We have had no hard fighting since the battle but no end of skirmishing. Some of those New Regts are not so good as a bug.

I see by the paper that Thomas Seymour was not elected and I am thankful for that. They is one thing that I should like to do, that is I should like to have a good Battle with those Northern Secesh and kill off about two thirds and then we can whip them there. It makes my blood boil when I think of these Traitors in my own State."

The "Secesh" were, of course, those Northerners who sympathized with the Southern States in their secession from the United States. Thomas Seymour, who had been Governor of Connecticut 1850-1853 was one of them.

From Andrew Candee to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson

La Fourche Crossing, May 6th.

(From other letters it is evident that this was in 1863)

"Our Co. is at Labradorville, a small village about 15 miles above here. There is 20 of us left here for Scouts and other duties and we do not have much to do but have easy times. This district is one of the finest sugar districts in the state. We are quartered on the plantation of an old rebel that has been confiscated. It is the best land I have ever seen. Our quarters are in the shade of a fine grove with the Col's just back of us in the plantation mansion.

This Bayou is a direct outlet of the Mississippi. The surface of the water is 6 or 8 feet above the surrounding country so we have to go up hill to get the stream.

There is a great many flowers here. The magnolia, a large white flower, is the most fragrant flower I have ever seen"

(This is the last letter of Andrew's, preserved by his sister. Frederick tells of Andrew's death in his letter of Nov. 17, 1863)
The last part of a letter from Frederic Candee to his sister Mary Candee Tomlinson.

(undated but before the letter of June 25, 1863)

"I was with Andrew all day, but we left at night and have not seen or heard from him. We are back in the old camp and in good fighting trim. We did not lose a man in the fight and only one slightly wounded. Report says that we are going to start out again this week and going to Port Hudson and from there to Vicksburg, and if you (we?) do you will hear from us, again pretty soon and we are in hopes we shall see a little fun in the shape of iron and lead. ---I am in good health and weigh 160 lbs and think I can do some pretty tall fighting---am coming home before long and eat some of them pies.

From your brother,
F. Candee

From Frederick Candee to his sister, Mary Candee Tomlinson.

Port Hudson, La. June 25th, 1863

(Port Hudson is on the Mississippi River, not far above Baton Rouge)

"Having a little spare time, thought would improve by giving a brief detail of the doings of the 19th Army Corp. We have been here at Port Hudson twenty-seven days and in the advance and

under fire all of the time. We are on the right and in about twenty rods of the Rebels' Breast Works.

The night of the 10th five Companys out of our Right was ordered to make an assault on their Rifle Pits. We started but was repulsed with the loss of fifty killed and wounded. My captain was one of the wounded. We had four Officers wounded that night. On the 19th our brigade was ordered to the left of the line to charge. We started about twelve o'clock at night and got into position about sunrise. When we was ordered to Charge, which we did and was repulsed with heavy loss. Report says we lost two thousand killed and wounded. I tell you it was a hard sight to see the boys fall and hear them call for help. But of such is a soldiers life. One of our own Shells burst within six feet of me and killed one man and the man that stood next to me had his arm blowed of close to his shoulder and completely covered me up with dirt.

But we are a going to try it again in two or three days and all fell confident that we shall meet with success.

We, that is, our Brigade started from Brashire City last April four thousand three Hundred strong. This morning, when the report was handed in it reported nine hundred and eight seven or discount of over three Thousand in three months. Rather hard show for us three years men. Gen Banks has issued an order for one thousand Volunteers to form a storming party and the boys have answered by signing their names. He has got two Thousand now and they are drilling for the charge and we all feel that Port Hudson is a doomed place. At least I hope to be able in a few days to inform you that P.H. is ours

(Note - It fell on July 9th)

I was talking with the Chaplain last evening and he said that we had lost seven thousand since we got to Port Hudson, that is, the loss of the whole Army since we have been fighting here at Port Hudson."

(Note - Vicksburg had surrendered on July 4th, so with the fall of Port Hudson, the Mississippi was in control of the Union forces throughout its entire length.)

Then came the news that Andrew was in a hospital in Mattatown, Illinois. This was told in a letter to Mr. Candee from one Maria Noyes, either a nurse or a visitor at the hospital, and a very sympathetic and understanding letter it is, and from it we quote the following: A letter from Maria Noyes written apparently to Mr. Frederick Burritt Candee about his son Andrew Candee.

Mattatown, Coles Co. Ills.

Aug 22, 1863

Dear Sir,

Since your son was brought to this hospital he has seemed

quite anxious to write to you, but was not willing for me to write because he said you and his Mother would be so disappointed not to see his own writing, however, I have prevailed upon him to let me write today. He is better than when he came-----I assure you we will try to do all that interest in him, and love for our brave soldiers can suggest---I will write again soon if he is not much better----Please write to him, for nothing cheers sick soldiers as letters from home.

Respectfully,
Maria Noyes

Andrew died at Mattatown Ill, Sep 30, 1863 on his way home from service in the late war

From Frederick Candee to his sister Mary Candee Tomlinson:

New Franklin, La. Oct 7th, 1863

"It has rained for four days and bids fair to last four more. We are encamped in an old cane field and mud is knee deep. For a shelter, we have got a piece of cotton cloth, and for our floors we got a few Bitters Weeds, and as for cloths we have got none except what we have got on and they has not been a dry thread in them for the last four days.

We are in the advance and I had rather fight four successive days than to pass through another storm like this. I would like to give five Dollars for the use of a good Hogpen for tonight to sleep in. We are expecting to go into Texas."

From Frederick Candee to his sister Mary Candee Tomlinson:

Camp New Vermilion, Nov 17th 1863

"I had heard of Andrew's death sometime before I received your letter. (dated Oct 28th). I will not attempt to describe my feelings, for I know, Dear Sister that you can imagine better than I can write.

Since I wrote last we have marched a good many days and have had some pretty hard skirmishes. Now we are encamped on the Reble General's Plantation by the name of Moteau. He is just above us with fifteen or twenty thousand Rebel Troops. We expect to have a hard battle before long. We have got about ten Thousand Infantry, six batteries and quite a large force of Cavalry. We have got rifle Pits dug the whole length of the line and feel confident that we can whip them when they come.

The other day my Regt went out after men. We had two sections of a battery. The Rebels came down on us. We masked our Artillery and fell back. The rebels came right on to them before they were aware of it. When the battery open fire, the Rebs fell like grass (it was awful.) The skirmish lasted a little over half

an hour, and the Rebels left two hundred killed on the field. They got all of their wounded off. We had to bury their dead. We had two killed and six wounded, that is, on our side. We have not seen any of them since until this morning. They came down with a flag of truce and ordered us to surrender. They said they would give us just five hours to decide. But ten hours have past and the Rebels have not come. Perhaps they had too severe a lesson the last time.

You wished to know when my time was out. We have got just one year more to serve. But that will soon pass away and then if nothing happens I shall be Home. We cannot tell what changes will take place in one short year, but hope for the best."

In 1863, things were not going so well in the Union Army. Union soldiers were deserting by the thousands, and it became evident that sufficient soldiers could not be obtained and maintained by voluntary enlistment. On March 3, 1863, Congress voted the first draft act, calling all men between 20 and 45. On the eighth of May, the President issued a proclamation setting the draft in force. The process of obtaining soldiers was highly unpopular and riots occurred in New York and Boston against its enforcement. But in the rest of the country, it was felt to be a distasteful necessity. The act, however, contained a provision that a man could be exempted by payment of \$300. The money, so accumulated, was used to hire substitutes.

In Oxford, these funds were in the control of First Selectman Benjamin Nichols. He was born in Oxford, son of Russel and Nabby Riggs Nichols. He grew to manhood on the old family farm there, receiving a common school education which he supplemented in later years by a generous course of reading. He married Minerva Tomlinson, daughter Truman Tomlinson, a blacksmith of Oxford. So it is seen that Oxford played its part in the defense of the Union about as other towns did, but no record of events has been found later than 1863.

The War of the Rebellion,
Soldiers furnished by the Town of Oxford.
(Listed in "History of the Old Town of Derby")

Ashley, Benjamin	3d. Independent Light Battery, Conn. Volunteers.		
Arnold, Christopher	2d. Regiment, Heavy Artillery,	"	"
Andrews, Elias C.	15th Regiment Infantry	"	"
Alling, Edwin J.	20th Regiment Infantry	"	"
Baldwin, Mills G.	3d. Independent Light Battery	"	"
Baldwin, Bernard S.	1st Regiment Heavy Artillery	"	"
Baldwin, Edward W.	20th Regiment Infantry	"	"
Butler, Charles H.	2d. Regiment Heavy Artillery	"	"
Bryant, Sylvester	7th Regiment Infantry	"	"

Brown, James	10th Regiment Infantry	Conn. Volunteers.
Baldwin, Herbert C.	13th Regiment Infantry	" "
Benham, Joseph H.	20th Regiment Infantry	" "
Benham, George B.	13th Regiment Infantry	" "
Baldwin Henry D.	20th Regiment Infantry	" "
Buckingham, Joel	20th Regiment Infantry	" "
Curtiss, Jasper L.	3d. Independent Light Battery	" "
Carmody, Michael	3d. Independent Light Battery	" "
Carr, Michael	3d Independent Light Battery	" "
Conley, Thomas	1st Regiment, Cavalry	" "
Carney, Richard M.	1st Regiment, Heavy Artillery	" "
Cotter, Frederick	2d. Regiment Heavy Artillery	" "
Chase, Israel	11th. Regiment Infantry	" "
Candee, Charles A.	29th Regiment Infantry	" "
Dougherty, Edward	2d. Regiment Heavy Artillery	" "
Downes, Chauncey S.	7th Regiment Infantry	" "
Downes, George	13th Regiment Infantry	" "
Dachs, Francois	15th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Downs, Robert	15th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Dorman, David C.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Downs, Albert W.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Davis, Henry W.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Davis, William C.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Dunn, Thomas	1st Regiment, Cavalry	" "
Eiler (or Euler), John	1st Regiment, Heavy Artillery	" "
Foley, Michael	3d Independent Light Battery, Conn. Volunteers	
Fox, Richard	3d Independent Light Battery, Conn. Volunteers	
Fordham, David	11th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Fillins, George W.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Gaines, Robert A.	3d Independent Light Battery,	" "
Gillett, Leonard	15th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Garvin, Edward	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Gordon, John	5th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Hawkins, John	7th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Hartnet, James	11th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Harwood, Andrew	14th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Hubbell, Frederick W.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Hubbell, John P.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Holden, Henry	1st Regiment, Cavalry	" "
Jennings, Wales R.	15th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers	
Kelley, Charles	3d Independent Light Battery	" "
Knost, John C.	6th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Kimberly, Albert A.	13th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Killmartin, Thomas	20th Regiment, Infantry,	" "
Lines, Marshall	2d Regiment Heavy Artillery	" "
Lesure, Swan L.	7th Regiment, Infantry,	" "

LeRoy, Emile	11th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers		
Lammest, Henry	11th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Livingston, George	14th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Lounsbury, George W.	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Munson, William C.	3d Independent Light Battery	"	"
Miller, Alfred	14th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers		
Moriarty, Canary	15th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Martin, John	15th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Martin, George	6th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
McEwen, Wooster B.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
McLaughlin, James	20th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Mitchell, William H.	29th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Oothout, John	1st Regiment Heavy Artillery	"	"
Osborn, Harvey T.	10th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers		
O'Reilly, Patrick	11th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Osborn, Ray F.	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Pushee, Gilman W.	13th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Platt, Orlando L.	20th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Powers, John	20th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Platt, George	23rd Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Peterson, Arnold	29th Regiment, Infantry,	"	"
Peck, Elisha	1st Regiment, Cavalry		
Ryan, Patrick F.	1st Regiment, Heavy Artillery	"	"
Ross, Robert	1st Regiment, Heavy Artillery	"	"
Ramsey, James	12th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers		
Riggs, George S.	11th Regiment, Infantry, Connecticut Volunteers		
Riggs Mark E.	Infantry,	"	"
Riggs, George W.	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Randon, August	11th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Ramsdell, Parker K.	20th " "	"	"
Stevens, Edward	3d Independent Lt. Battery	"	"
Stevens, Joseph	3d Independent Lt. Battery	"	"
Sears, Henry E.	6th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Smith, John	11th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Skiff, Walter	13th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Scoville, Bennett	13th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Scoville, Charles	13th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Scoville, Charles	1st Regiment, Cavalry	"	"
Sanford, George W.	14th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Smith, Oscar	15th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Stewart, Edwin W.	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Smith, Dwight C.	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Stuart, Horace	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Sackett, Lucius	20th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Tomlinson, Edmund B.	10th Regiment, Infantry	"	"
Weyle, Gilbert	3d Independent Lt. Battery	"	"

Warner, Theodore F.	2d Regiment, Heavy Artillery
Waters, Henry W.	6th Regiment, Infantry
Waters, David R.	10th Regiment, Infantry
Wheeler, Elbert E.	10th Regiment, Infantry

CHAPTER 23

A BLACKSMITH OF 1865

On the west side of Riggs Street, there stands a house which, from its architecture appears to have been built about 1830. In 1865, it was occupied by Everett Hubbell and his wife Jane. At that time, their eldest son, Wales A. Hubbell was 22 years old and had learned the trade of blacksmith, and had set up a shop of his own on his father's place. Numerous horseshoes have been found on the place. He died in May, 1866 and left behind him an account book of his operations as a blacksmith. He did work for Louis B. Perkins, Charles Perkins, Sylvester Platt, William Tucker, E. Wheeler, Burritt Davis, George Perry, Egbert Warner, Hiram Osborn, Lewis Barnes, A. Hinman, Abraham Smith, Enos Candee, Albert Towner, Nehemiah Andrews, H. Cables, Stiles Fairchild, W. O. Clark, W. C. Church, S. P. Sanford and A. C. Buckingham.

His accounts show a wide variety of work done and modest charges therefor. Shoeing a horse varied from 50¢ to one dollar, depending probably on the number of shoes applied. Shoeing oxen ran from \$1.74 to \$3.00, the latter figure presumably being for a pair of oxen, completely reshod. Miscellaneous jobs included Mending spring, \$1.00, Staple 30¢, Iron wedges, 50¢, banding boxes 62¢, Fixing brake 50¢, Iron Wagon \$10.00, chains, \$2.02, Chainhook, 30¢, Pins 20¢, Bolts, 30¢, Fixing buggy wheel \$2.00, Fixing buggy dash, 75¢, sled, \$3.00, Wagon shaft, \$1.00, Irons for doors, 75¢, Hinges, \$5.00, Spikes, 15¢ Fixing crowbars and Picks, \$10.37, Sharpening drills 20¢. A blacksmith was clearly an important factor in the economy of a town like Oxford, before the days of big business.

CHAPTER 24

THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY, AND THE GRANGE

THE OXFORD AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY AND ANNUAL FAIR

The earliest record of the Society and Fair which has been found is the Premium (or Prize) List dated October 13, 1875, which is there named "the Twelfth Annual Cattle Show", indicating that the first show was held in 1863. The 1875 Premium List gives the following officers:

President, Joel White

Vice Presidents, Burritt Davis, D. P. Johnson, Nathaniel Walker

Recording Secretary, R. S. Hinman

Corresponding Secretary, N. J. Wilcoxson

Treasurer, C. H. Butler

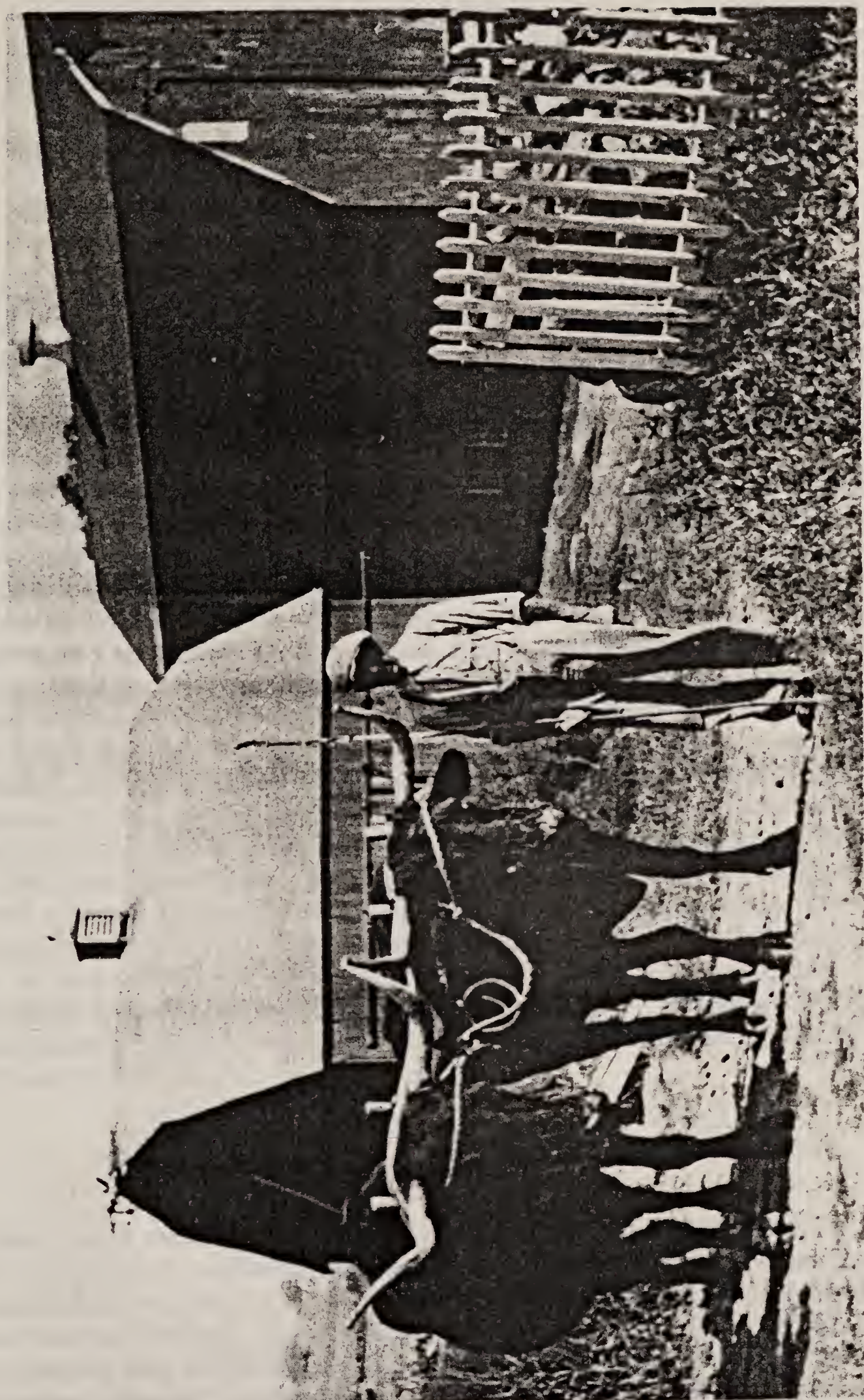
Marshal, D. P. Johnson

Directors, W. B. McEwen, George M. Hine, T. F. Warner, John
Hawley, H. A. Lum, S. W. Buckingham

Prizes were given in amounts of two or three dollars for the best bulls and cows, working oxen and draught oxen. It must be understood that oxen were the tractors of that day. Horses were divided into several classes; Stallions, Breed Mares, Geldings, Roadsters, and Draught Horses. The highest prize, \$12.00 was awarded to the best roadster, showing the popular demand for a horse which could step along lively drawing the family carriage from town to town. We may say in passing that no boy was ever allowed to drive a horse until he had learned to harness the horse and how to drive him without injuring him. It was not all so simple as it may now appear. Prizes were also given for sheep, hogs, and poultry. Also for butter, cheese, honey and bread, vegetables, fruit, and flowers.

The women's hand work was not neglected in the awards, prizes being offered for rag carpet, bed quilts, quilted counterpanes, comfortables, knit stockings, knit mittens or gloves. No one but the person who has slept under one of those patch-work quilts lined with the lightest and softest of lamb's fleece can realize how light and warm they were. Prizes were also awarded for silk embroidery, worsted embroidery, fancy work, tidies, crochet work, shell work, painting, wax flowers; showing the variety of hand work undertaken by the women of the town at this time.

In the Premium List for 1881, several advertisements were included, chiefly from concerns in Birmingham, Ansonia, Seymour, and



Mr. Atwater C. Treat of Chestnut Hill, and his span of Oxen.

Derby, but there is one from Oxford, which reads as follows:

CHAS. H. BUTLER
DEALER IN
DRY GOODS, GROCERIES, BOOTS AND SHOES
GENERAL MERCHANDISE
WILL AS USUAL BE PREPARED TO FURNISH OYSTERS AND
REFRESHMENTS ON FAIR DAY.
POST OFFICE BUILDING
OXFORD, CONN.

"Refreshments" was hard cider, this item appearing frequently in the books of the old store. Butler and Sanford were partners in the General Store and Post Office advertised above, which was located in Oxford Center, on the east side of the Oxford-Seymour Road (Route 67) just north of Academy Road. It is thought that the fair was held on the Oxford Town Green.

In the Premium List of 1875, an advertisement of Robert B. Bradley of New Haven, Connecticut includes among other things, "Ice Tools". These were presumably for cutting ice from the ponds in winter and handling it for storage in their own "ice houses".

This is followed by the advertisement of J. Goodrich and Co. Manufacturer of Light Carriages, Side and End Spring Buggies, Light Road wagons, Top and no-top phaetons, Platform phaetons, Two-seat phaetons, Basket and Panel Pony phaetons, Rockaways etc. There is some doubt whether the more fancy types of vehicle were in much use in Oxford, but the buggies and light Road Wagons were certainly fairly common. In this list of light carriages, a notable change in the names from the early 1800's appears; "chairs", "chaise", "chariot" all missing. But these new "light carriages" were just that and they were a marvel of what we would now call "engineering" and "draftsmanship".

Bradley and Co. included another advertisement of "a large assortment of Fall and Winter Machinery such as Family wine and cider mills, cast iron apple grinders, and cast iron Cider mill screws. They do not include "stills", but no doubt they were available, or at least "the makings" were.

THE OXFORD GRANGE

The Grange movement in the United States started soon after the Civil War when President Johnson sent an employee of the Department of Agriculture to make a survey of the condition of farmers, especially in the Southern States. As a result, the National Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry was formed, December 4, 1867, the object being to organize the farmers in all parts of the country. The term "grange" is an old English name used to designate a farm, usually one with a house set at some distance from its neighbors.

The National Grange was divided into State and subordinate assemblies or "granges". It was a semi-fraternal organization and developed a ritual of its own for its meetings. There were four degrees for men and four for women, whose membership was on an equal footing with that of the men. Its purposes were two; the industrial benefit and social improvement of its members.

By 1875, there were some 30,000 granges in existence and at its 25th anniversary in 1891, it was said to have brought about many notable achievements tending to improve the condition of farmers, including the prevention of renewal of patents on sewing machines, thus saving the people millions annually, it being a time when every household that could afford it, had a sewing machine; also the making of the Secretary of Agriculture a Cabinet Officer in 1862.

A "Declaration of Purposes" issued in 1874, included among many others the following significant ones:

"To develop a better and higher manhood and womanhood among ourselves, we propose meeting together, talking together, working together, buying together, selling together, and in general, acting together for our mutual protection and advancement."

Important questions which the National Grange took in hand were the rapid increase of insects through undue slaughter of birds, the exposure of attempted swindles to which the isolation of the farmer in those days rendered him particularly liable, and of combinations to extort money for the use of articles falsely claimed to be patented, such as "the swing gate, the driven well." Other achievements included free delivery of mail to rural population, and the promotion of interest in agricultural colleges and the creation of cooperative fire-insurance companies.

OXFORD GRANGE #194

The organization of a grange in Oxford was thought of by Charles W. Mix who became interested in grange work through Mrs. Mary Bice, a member of Seymour Grange #91, and at whose home he was living. This idea interested several townspeople in forming a grange, and a meeting was held Thursday evening, April 26, 1928, when about forty people assembled in Gabler's Hall. The work and benefits of the order were explained by Deputy Emerson J. Leonard of Wallingford and Walter Hine of Orange, a member of Woodbridge Grange #108.

Officers were elected that evening as follows, Atwater C. Treat, Master; Overseer, Edward P. Rowland; Lecturer, Mrs. Atwater C. Treat; Steward, Harold M. Cassidy; Asst. Steward, Allan J. Benson; Chaplain, Charles W. Mix; Treasurer, Nelson M. Cable; Secretary, Richard E. Nyberg; Gatekeeper, J. Nelson Harger; Ceres, Mrs.

Nelson M. Cable; Pomona, Mrs. Harold M. Cassidy; Flora, Mrs. Albert K. Pope; Lady Asst. Steward, Miss Edna Rowland; Executive Committee, Philip Rowland, R. Irving Sanford and G. Walter James.

A charter was obtained, and Oxford Grange #194 organized on May 10, 1928. There were twenty-four men and twenty-four women charter members, and they were obligated in the first and second degrees by Deputy Emerson J. Leonard of Wallingford Grange #33. The third and fourth degrees were "exemplified" by the Wallingford Grange degree team. State Master Minor Ives and Mrs. Ives were present and installed the newly-elected officers and Mrs. Sarah L. Curtis, Lecturer of Conn. State Grange, was also present. The rooms at the Congregational parish house were secured in which to hold the meetings. The officers and members entered into grange work enthusiastically.

By January 1, 1929, the membership had been increased by thirty-two. Thirty-nine candidates, the largest class in the history of the Grange, received the degrees on December 26, 1929. Each succeeding year found the membership increased. In March 1933, there were 200 members. A few members were lost from lack of interest by the Fifth Anniversary so the total was only 184. On the Tenth Anniversary there were 182 members and at present the membership is about 180.

On July 12, 1928 a building fund was started by Deputy Emerson J. Leonard with a gift of Five Dollars. Small amounts were added to this with proceeds received from card parties, dinners, etc. At the end of the first year, a ways and means committee was appointed to see about the selection of a site and financing the building of a hall. Committees were also appointed to interview owners of land and to solicit funds from Grange members and all others interested.

One can note the enthusiasm and willingness to work on the part of the members as there was in the building fund the small amount of One Hundred Dollars at the time it was proposed to build a Grange Hall. The brothers were successful in soliciting money as all the money except that from the Seymour Trust Company and Rock Rimmon Grange #142 was loaned without interest to be paid back as the Grange's financial condition allowed. Many of the townspeople were generous and gave gifts of money.

The result was a building lot 100 x 275 feet purchased from Brother Newell Ives on June 1, 1929. The Building Committee was comprised of Bros. G. Walter James, Fred R. Bice Jr., Joseph Lineweber Sr., and Charles P. Pope.

On August 6, 1929 the contract for the building of the Grange hall was awarded to Wilfred J. Megin, a member of Beacon Valley Grange #103. During August, ground was broken for the cellar, the brothers dug the cellar and hauled stones for the cellar wall. The entire first story is made of field stone and the second story is of wooden structure shingled. The first meeting in the new hall was on December 12, 1929.

On January 1, 1930, the laying of the corner stone and dedication service of Oxford Grange Hall took place with State Master Minor Ives as the dedicating officer assisted by the Oxford Grange officers. Among those present were State Master Minor Ives and Mrs. Ives, State Lecturer Sarah L. Curtis and Mr. Curtis, Deputy Emerson J. Leonard and Mrs. Leonard, Mrs. Jessie Perry, Master and Deputy Harold Perry of Excelsior Pomona #7 and Mrs. Perry, Deputy Edgar L. Tucker of Fairfield County Pomona #9 and Mrs. Tucker.

A number of gifts were presented to the Grange at this time among which was a gift of Twenty-five Dollars from Mr. and Mrs. Walter Hine of Orange, a Bible for the Altar from the First Master and Lecturer, Mr. & Mrs. Atwater C. Treat, and a large American flag from the Connecticut State Grange.

During the next three years, a red velvet stage curtain was installed, the heating system was paid for, the interior of the hall decorated, grounds graded in the rear of the hall providing more parking space. Through the generosity of Stephen B. Church of Oxford a driven well was installed and to this was connected an automatic electric pumping outfit which supplies running water to the building.

The money necessary to finance all the expenses and improvements has been raised in many different ways -- card parties, socials, organ recital, lawn party, carnivals, suppers, home talent minstrel show, three-act plays, and banquets. One of the largest incomes has been from old-fashioned and modern dances held weekly except during the summer months.

The first community work done by Oxford Grange was to place flags and a wreath on the honor roll on May 30, 1928. The willingness of the grange members to undertake the responsibility of building a grange hall was a benefit to the whole community making possible a suitable place for large gatherings, town meetings, and social activities of all groups in the town.

On May 28, 1932 the Grange took part in the Washington Bicentennial. Two benefit dances have been given and substantial sums were given to a widowed Mother who was ill, although not a member of the Grange. Also to a Brother who lost his barn by fire. The grange also exercised considerable influence in the improvement of town roads, including tar surfaces ("black top")

One of the most outstanding pieces of Community Work was the erection of the Soldiers' War Memorial, after learning that a fund had been lying idle since October 1920, the Grange took an active interest in completing this fund. On Armistice Day, November 11, 1930 the War Memorial was dedicated.

CHAPTER 25

THE SEYMOUR RECORD

A circular dated March 10, 1871 told of the forthcoming issuance of a local newspaper in Seymour to be known as the "Seymour Record" and to be edited by W. C. Sharpe who had once taught school in Oxford. It commenced May 1, 1871, and the first year, one number was issued on the first of each month. In its very first number it published the following comment on Oxford:

"Oxford, in a pleasant valley, staid and serene as its venerable Judge W., except on fair days, when it unbends to welcome the strangers who come to see the productions of the farm or skillful fingers."

The "venerable Judge W." is believed to be Judge Nathan J. Wilcoxson, who born in 1796 was seventy-five years old at this date. The "annual fair" referred to was presumably that of the "Oxford Agricultural Society" held, it is said, on the Town Green. It was started in 1863 and continued to as late as 1881, a premium list for that year being still preserved.

In the December 15, 1871 issue of the "Seymour Record" appears the following comment on Quaker Farms:

"Mr. Editor, Onward is the word here, for we are progressing. Formerly we had a store, the influence of which was bad, and the church was part of the time closed; now the store is closed and the church is opened for service regularly. The school where you (Wm. C. Sharpe) once taught is in a prosperous condition. We have been fortunate in securing good teachers. Some months ago, Mr. Charles Hawkins was struck by lightning and two of the female inmates were knocked to the floor, but without permanent injury."

signed, "Subscriber"

CHAPTER 26

OXFORD 1932 HISTORICAL CELEBRATION AND GEORGE WASHINGTON BICENTENNIAL

PROLOGUE TO THE HISTORICAL PAGEANT

My children! my children and my guests!

I am the Spirit of Oxford.

I am Oxford, your Mother!

I am the Daughter of an ancient city,

An ancient and noble city:

Oxford on the Thames,

The Mother of great Colleges!

My children and my guests!

I greet you today:

I greet you and welcome you.

I welcome you to our flower-sprinkled valleys,

Our verdant hillsides, and our pleasant groves.

I welcome you to our friendly streets, our sacred
shrines, and our ancient and hospitable dwellings.

This is my home: today it is also yours.

Two centuries and a half have I dwelt here!

And yet, it seems but yesterday, when my stalwart sons
crossed the "great river", the Housatonic, and built
their cabins in the shelter of those friendly hills.

There were red-men here in those days, and they welcomed
my sons to their friendly lodges: and my sons traded with
them, and dwelt among them as brethren.

And my sons and my daughters were a God-fearing and a God-serving
generation.

They occupied this good land in diligence and sobriety.

And their sons and daughters "rose up and called them blessed".

And the men and women of the generations that followed
Wrought a noble work.

Some were tillers of the soil, some were hewers and joiners
of wood, some wrought by the loom and wheel, some were craftsmen
and artisans: others were merchants, manufacturers and tradesmen,
some were churchmen, soldiers and statesmen.

Our tradition is that of our beloved America, freedom, industry, and
integrity.

As I welcome you on this day of our rejoicing,
 Permit me to repeat again that ancient hymn,
 Which has been my guiding star
 both in the time of tribulation and prosperity, and
 shall be to the end of time:

‘I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills; from whence cometh my help
 My help cometh even from the Lord, who hath made heaven and
 earth.

He will not suffer thy foot to be moved, and He that keepeth thee
 will not sleep.

Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.
 The Lord Himself is thy keeper; the Lord is thy defense upon thy
 right hand;

So that the sun shall not burn thee by day, neither the moon by night.
 The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; yea, it is even Thee
 that shall keep thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in from this
 time forth for evermore.’

Rev. H. S. Douglas

On Saturday May 28th and Sunday May 29th, 1932 an historical celebration was held in Oxford, commemorating the 250th anniversary of the coming of the white settlers to the town of Oxford, and also the George Washington Bi-centennial.

Saturday's program included the following:

Flag presented to the town by officers of Sarah Ludlow Chapter D.A.R. of Seymour, and raised at the Upper Green, Oxford Center.

Parade of floats by schools, clubs, etc., along Route 67 toward Oxford Center, where it was reviewed by Hon. Wilbur L. Cross, Governor of Connecticut, with an address by him. Singing by school children.

Concert by drum corps and Historical Pageant on Lower Green.

Exhibition of Antiques and Curios at the Episcopal Rectory, Oxford Center. Old fashioned costume dance at the Grange Hall.

The events of Sunday May 29th included:

Services at St. Thomas Roman Catholic Church, Old-Home day service at the Congregational Church, and an open-air service and unveiling of tablet commemorating the founding of the first Episcopal Church in Oxford on slope near St. Peter's Cemetery on Governors Hill Road.

The Program of the Historical Pageant follows:

PROLOGUE

The Spirit of Oxford speaks to her children and her guests
 Mrs. Atwater Treat



George Washington BiCentennial, Scene at Washband Tavern.

Aesthetic Dance by Oxford young ladies representing "A June morning on the Oxford meadows"

Miss Dorothy Ives-chairman

Miss Gladys Meyer, director

Episode I. Prior to 1682

Indians making a temporary camp

Oxford Boy Scouts-Rev. L. B. Hale, scoutmaster

Oxford Girl Scouts-Mrs. A. E. Buell, captain

Episode II. 1682-1740

Settlers trading with the Indians for land

Group from Quaker Farms

Mrs. Leslie Tomlinson, chairman

Episode III. - 1743

Oxford residents receiving the charter of Oxford Parish from representatives of the General Assembly

Group from St. Thomas Church

Mr. Michael Cassidy, chairman

Episode IV. 1782

Return of Oxford's Revolutionary soldiers. Training Day on the village Green.

Group from Oxford Grange P. of H.

Mr. Edward P. Rowland, chairman

Episode V. - 1798

Incorporating of the Town of Oxford. Town meeting followed by a garden party celebrating the event. Minuet, May poles and drills by Oxford children.

Men's group in charge of Mr. Richard C. Jacobs

Ladies group in charge of Mrs. G. Walter James
and Miss Ruth Sanford

School children in charge of the teachers and
Supervisor I. B. Dunfield

Tableau

George and Martha Washington, Miss Liberty, Uncle Sam, The Thirteen Original States, Legionaires, Red Cross Nurses, and the entire cast. Singing of the Bicentennial Song,
"Father of the Land We Love"

Tableau in charge of Oxford Parent-Teachers

Mrs. Louis Linewebber, chairman

Cast of the Tableau

George Washington---Mr. Michael Cassidy

Uncle Sam Mr. Nelson Cable

Martha Washington Mrs. Palmer

Liberty Miss Helen Arnold

Executive Committee

Rev. Henry S. Douglas, General Chairman	
Mrs. Hubert Stoddard	Mr. Michael Cassidy
Rev. Lincoln B. Hale	Mr. Charles Mix
Mrs. Nicholas Madorno	Mrs. Morris Currish
Mrs. Sherman Stanford	Mrs. Irving Sanford
Mr. G. Walter James	Mrs. G. Walter James
Mrs. Oscar Larson	Miss Ruth Sanford
Miss Julia Crofut	Mrs. I. Burton Dunfield
Mrs. Leslie Tomlinson	

Parade Committee

Mr. Michael Cassidy, chairman

Music Committee

Rev. L. B. Hale

Luncheon Committee

Mrs. Oscar Larson, chairman

Publicity and Printing

Mr. Charles Mix, chairman

Old Fashioned Dance

Mr. G. Walter James, chairman

Historical Exhibit and Tea

Mrs. S. Sanford, chairman

Concessions, St. Peter's Girls Club

Mrs. Mildred D. Lawrence, chairman

Properties and Seating

Mr. Morris Currish, chairman

Ushers and Assistants during the Pageant

Warren Bice, Robert Cable, Edwin Cassidy, David Hall,
Clarence Olsen

CHAPTER 27

THE CONNECTICUT TERCENTENARY CELEBRATION IN OXFORD, 1935

TERCENTENARY OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT 1635-1935

The Town of Oxford celebrated the Tercentenary with appropriate ceremonies. A pamphlet was published, with the following inscription,-

"To the Pioneers who have made Connecticut what she is, and to those Pioneers who will make Connecticut all she may be- this program is dedicated by the Town of Oxford.

"The mystery of its woods and hills reveals to those who listen, secrets of enduring truth."

Saturday June 8, Sunday June 9 1935

The Tercentary General Committee follows,-

General Chairman- Rev. Henry S. Douglas

Printing- Mr. Hubert E. Stoddard, Miss J. Mabel Lum, Mr. Charles Pope

Markers- Mr. R. Z. Hawkins, Mr. R. C. Jacobs, Mrs. M. Shelton

Luncheon-East- Mrs. Oscar Larson, Mrs. Newell Ives- West-

Mrs. R. Peck, Mrs. Sadie Olson, Mrs. Cyrus Shelton, Mrs. R. H. Treat, Mrs. B. Salveson, Mrs. B. Thorsen.

Tercentary Ball- Messrs G. Walter James, E. P. Rowland, R. E. Nyberg, John Pope, Clark Pope, Fred Bice, Jr., David Hall, Cyrus Shelton.

School and Boy Scout Activities- Mr. Floyd, Teachers, Revs. C. S. Ramsey and H. S. Douglas

United Religious Service- Mrs. Edward P. Rowland, Mr. H. L. Tomlinson, Mrs. Lillian Pope, Revs. Ramsey and Douglas.

Music- Mr. Cyrus Shelton, Mr. Clarence Roberts

Tercentenary Tree- The Oxford Garden Club, Mr. and Mrs. Irving Sanford, Mr. Thomas Schreiber

Sacred Concert- Oxford Parent Teachers Association, Mr. Frederick May, Chairman.

Entertainment of Speakers- Messrs. S. B. Church, R. Peck, Wm. Curtiss, C. P. Pope, H. E. Stoddard.

Reception Committee- Messrs R. Peck, Wm. Curtiss, C. P. Pope, Clarence Roberts, S. B. Church, C. M. Eckstrom, I. R. Sanford, Ralph Wheeler.

Traffic Control- Messrs E. S. Williams, Wm. Curtiss, Chris Olsen,
Thomas Schreiber

Properties- August Douillet, Nelson Cable, Cyrus Shelton, Clarence
Roberts.

Messengers and Ushers- The Boy Scouts.

Secretary- Miss Eloise Pope

Additional Members- Mr. and Mrs. Lackeye, Mr. Freeman, Mrs.
Currish, Mrs. Abercrombie, Mrs. Hall, Mrs. Albert Pope.

Program.

Saturday, June 8.

A.M.

7.00 Ringing of church bells.

9.00 Planting of Tercentenary trees by Oxford Garden Club. Near hall
at Quaker Farms. (S.E. Corner of Quaker Farms Road and
Hog's Back Rd.)

9.30 On Upper Green, Oxford Center.

10.00 Maypole Dances by Oxford School children, lower green.

10.30 Boy Scout Activities, lower green, troops 1 and 2

11.00 Singing by chorus of Oxford school children. Playing by drum
corps of boys and girls from Maple Street School and Center
School, Seymour.

11.15 Addresses by the Hon. Wilbur L. Cross, Governor of the State of
Connecticut, and by Senator Henry M. Bradley

P.M.

12.30 Luncheon Recess. At this hour visitors are welcome to visit the
Boy Scout Exhibition and witness out door cooking and other ac-
tivities.

2.00 First Scene of Historical Tour.

Scene 1.

William Pope House. John Pope, Chairman.

This House, nearly opposite St. Peter's Episcopal Church is one
of the original seven houses that formed the so-called center of
Oxford, and was built about 1750 by the Candee family.

Scene 2.

The Congregational Church, Rev. C. S. Ramsey, Chairman

The Congregational Society of Oxford was incorporated in 1741
and built the first meeting house in 1743, the Worthy Jonathan
Lyman being the first minister.

The scene depicted the gathering of the townspeople for the first
service in the present meeting house, with the people assembled
on the green for a brief service of dedication, led by Rev. Daniel
Bronson, after which they entered the meeting house for continu-
ation of the service.

Scene 3.

The Old Toll Gate and the New Federal Highway

Michael Cassidy, Chairman

The main road through Oxford was the second chartered toll road in Connecticut, granted in the year 1795, and was continued as a toll road for over 80 years.

The scene depicted the toll-gate keeper at his post at the Toll Gate. As people passed through the gate, they were asked to pay a toll of 10 cents for which they received a copy of the Tercenary pamphlet. If the passer held one of the pamphlets he was considered as having paid his toll.

The toll gate used in this scene was apparently located on Route 67 at the house just south of DeVaux's Garage.

The cement road had been completed just prior to the celebration forming a strong contrast to the original dusty, rough road.

The "Mineral Spring" is located about one mile south of town, and was called the "Pool", due to the supposed healing powers of the water. Once a month a yellowish scum will collect on the surface of the water, which in a few days will run off and leave the pool perfectly clear. It has never been known to run dry. Near this site, Little River tumbles over a very pretty water fall into a natural rock lined chasm.

About one-half mile further south is the site where, in 1870, a dam was built across Little River and a factory erected for the manufacture of croquet sets.

Scene 4.

The Old Indian Tree. Rev. H. S. Douglas, Chairman.

"Located on the north end of Albert Pope's property, this tree was supposed to mark the dividing line of the territory of the Pootatuck Indians and the Chusetown (Seymour) Indians. There is a tradition that no Indian from either tribe was permitted to pass over the line into the adjoining territory without permission from the Indians he wished to visit. The Indians of the two tribes usually met at the boundary."

The scene showed Indians of the two tribes gathered near the tree, trading merchandise and trinkets for hides, flint and quartz stones.

Scene 5.

The Buckingham House. Mrs. Jennie Peck, Chairman.

"This house was built in 1779 by Philo Holbrook for his bride, Ann Wooster. Mrs. Holbrook was known throughout the country side as Aunt Annis. The wedding scene was enacted here.

Scene 6.

The Albert Pope House, Mrs. Sherman Sanford, Chairman.

"This was formerly the Washband Tavern, built in 1714 by Mr.

John Twitchell, and was the favorite overnight stopping place for travelers from Woodbury and beyond to New Haven. The scene depicted the wedding of Rachel, the slave of Col. Wooster, to Tobiah, son of a slave of Rev. Richard Mansfield. It was one of the few legal slave weddings in Connecticut.

Tobiah was willing to pay the white folks' fee if he could be married 'like white folks'. The preacher, Rev. Mansfield, forfeited his fee when he refused to sing the Psalms and kiss the bride."

Scene 7

The Fred Bice, Sr. House, Miss Julia Crofut, Chairman. This house, located at the corner of the Highway (Route 67) and Park Road is close to the site of the tavern of Col. John Wooster of Revolutionary fame, justice of the peace, leading citizen, and adviser to all. (Note. In a copy of the program given to the writer by the Rev. H. S. Douglas, he has corrected this to read "Capt." instead of Col.)

The scene depicted the abduction of Chauncey Judd from Bethany and his lodging in the Wooster Tavern, and the rescue therefrom by the old Negro servant Tobiah.

The scene also depicted an old fashioned quilting bee.

The program continues, - "On the farther bank of Little River, which you will cross, close to the stream, stood the cabins in which the slaves of Capt. Wooster lived.

"A few rods further along this road is a level space, now a ball field, which was formerly part of a forest preserve and deer park." The name, "Park Road" is derived from this fact.

Scene 8

Indian Incident. Rev. H. S. Douglas, Chairman.

The scene was based on a traditional incident, showing Indians making camp, and busy at arrow making, fishing and preparation of food. Also the trial of a young captive.

Scene 9

The Dytko House. Mrs. Miles Shelton, Chairman

This house, erected in 1741, was the home of Lt. John Griffin, the first white child to be born in Oxford (1725) (Note. This house is the stone house located on the south side of Park Road whereit turns north eastward from Moose Hill Road.)

The scene depicted the christening of the child.

Scene 10

The Roberts House. Miss Flora Roberts, Chairman.

(Note) This house is located in Quaker Farms on the east side of Quaker Farms Rd. Route 188 at the head of Barry Road, formerly Old Mill Road.)

It was built by Silas Hawkins about 1781, has hand hewn timbers and boards, wrought nails and rugged frame construction. It is now occupied by the fourth and fifth generations of Hawkins descendants. The scene depicted here was that of an old time sewing bee.

The program continues, - "The Stanton house, nearby, was occupied by the first English inhabitant, a Dr. Butler, a Quaker and a hunter who maintained a hermit residence here for many years" A note in the Rev. H. S. Douglas handwriting in the writer's copy of the program says "Error, According to Mr. T. Hines who said I. Wooster built it in latter part of 17th Century." Butler's house is thought to be the cellar hole on Capt. Wooster Road, just beyond the Stanton house.

Scene 11

The Old Burying Ground.

This lies on Capt. Wooster Road about 40 rods north of the Stanton house. "There are two known Revolutionary officers buried there, and it is believed there are other soldiers in unmarked graves, also an Indian.

Scene 12

The Copper Mine

"About two miles south from the Roberts House, on the road leading past the school, is the site of a copper mine. Good copper ore was obtained here, but the cost of smelting made production unprofitable and the mine was abandoned about 100 years ago." (Note. Since the date of the Tercentenary, the Schoolhouse referred to has been turned into the Hawkins fire house, at the south west corner of Quaker Farms Road and Barry Road. The mine is located a short distance westward from Copper Mine Road just back of a group of small houses, about half way from the beginning of Copper Mine Rd. at Loughlin Rd. and the southern end of Freeman Rd. where it rejoins Coppermine Rd.)

Scene 13

Christ Church, Quaker Farms, Mrs. Harry Andrews, chairman This church was built between 1812 and 1815 and the scene will be that of a group of parishioners lingering about the steps of the meeting house after service, discussing the crops, the neighbors and the events of the day.

Scene 14

Derby Town Meeting of 1798, Mrs. Leslie Tomlinson, chairman This scene will take place in the meadow of Mr. Carl Chandler, a short distance west from Christ Church. This town meeting gave the decision which made Oxford a separate town. The players will enact the exciting doings of that day when the voters

of Derby were outwitted, and the Oxford voters were rewarded for the seven long years of perseverance and unfaltering determination.

CHAPTER 28

WORLD WARS I. AND II.

WORLD WAR I.

On May 4, 1915, to the great indignation of the people of the United States, Germany sank the British liner "Lusitania", and on February 1, 1917, Germany began unrestricted warfare and the United States by Executive Order, began to arm its merchant ships. Then on April 6, 1917 Congress declared that a state of war existed with Germany. President Wilson followed this up by signing May 15th the "Selective Military Conscription Bill", affecting all men between the ages of 21 and 30, popularly known as the "draft".

In 1931, a bronze tablet was set up on a rock on the Upper Green on the east side of Route 67, bearing the names of those who were in the armed services during World War I. This list contains 38 names.

LIST OF NAMES ON THE BRONZE TABLET ON THE UPPER GREEN

Commemorating those in the Armed Services of the United States
during World War I

Albert E. Arnold	Wm. R. Houlihan	Edgar C. Palmer
Maurice A. Barry	Reid P. Hubbell	Fred W. Pfeiffer
Carl Benson	Frederick Knapp	Clarence F. Roberts
Frank W. Carlson	Samuel Levy	Herbert Roberts
Ole S. Christensen	Arthur F. Lundin	Chauncey B. Sanford
Albert C. Dahinden	Frank Marshall	Clifford H. Smith
Ralph E. Davis	Maurice Levy	Herman Sonnestuhl
Thomas F. Derry	Charles T. Mitchell	August J. Tilquist
Clifford Dilley	Thomas Marshall	Frank Trevelin
Alfred S. Donahue	Clarence McConnie	John H. Townsend
Henry D. Field	Walter J. Mitchell	James F. Townsend
Albert H. Graf	Albert Mitchell	E. N. Williams
Albert G. Hansen	Homer Olmstead	

World War Two.

The United States entered World War Two, Dec. 7, 1941, when, without notice, over 100 Japanese planes attacked our Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The war ended Sep. 2, 1945 when the Japanese

formally surrendered. In front of the Oxford Town Hall stands a wooden post bearing the inscription, "Town of Oxford Military Honor Roll", and a list of names which are presumably the names of those who were in the Armed Services during World War II. It however is thought to be inaccurate. The list is as follows:

Adomaitis, J.	Gilpin, J.	Laurigan, W.	Ploch, L.
Adomaitis, J.	Godshall, R.	Lyons, C.	Peck, R.
	Griswold, S.	Lyons, J.	Paradise, P.
Bennett, R.	Griswold, R.	Larson, C.	Popowski, K.
Baker, C.	Griswold, E.	Larson, M.	Popowski, J.
Blythe, R.	Griswold, L.		Popowski, F.
Bobrowski, A.	Griswold, C.	Mullen, L.	
Burt, S.	Gray, J.	Minor, R.	Roberts, G.
Belinsky, P.	Gardo, A.	Mikulich, A.	Rzesutek, J.
Budrus, J.	Gunderson, G.	Miles, H.	Rice, W.
		Miles, E.	Reilly, E.
Crossman, T.	Hansen, A.	Miles, D.	
Congdon, K.	Hubbell, C.	Miles, R.	Seccombe, S.
Cassidy, E.	Hubbell, E.	Miles, F.	Stakum, M.
Clark, C.	Hubbell, E.	Moselle, R.	Solberg, W.
Cauxx, R.	Honcomon, H.	Mc.Kenna J.	Steel, E.
		Martin, J.	Stanton, R.
Dilly, E.	Jaroszowski, E.	Magda, J.	Schaefer, G.
Demrae, W.		Magda, W.	Smith, W.
Dunlap, S.	Kluczinsky, V.	Magda, J.	Santerre E.
Davidson, R.	Kluczinsky, J.	Mosavich, W.	Smith, L.
Douillet, A.	Kobel, R.	Mandatto, R.	Samoker, B.
Douillet, R.	Kinney, O.	Moskwa, M.	Schench, H.
Dytko, P.	Kryszkiewicz, J.		Schench, L.
Dytko, H.	Katrenya, J.	Newkirk, E.	Schenek, L.
Dytko, Miss E.	Koslowski, J.	Newkirk, E.	Sweeney, T.
Dytko, A.	Kowslowski, E.	Nardi, L.	Schoenberg, M.
Drew, F.	Kowslowski, S.	Natusch, M.	Shearer, L.
Drew, F.	Kowslowski, L.	Natusch, E.	
Drew, S.	Klanko, J.		Tuzik, J.
Derrg, F.	Korin, M.	Olsen, H.	Tuzik, M.
Eames, H.	Kacerguis, A.	Oleson, E.	Tomosaitis, A.
Everetts, Mrs. V.		Oczkowski, F.	Tomosaitis, B.
Emutis, V.	Ley, J.	O'Donovan, R.	Treat, R.
	Labordi, F.		Treat, C.
Fritz, J.	Ladun, J.	Pope, R.	Treat, A.
Fox, W.	Lane, D.	Prokop, E.	Tuttle, F.
Fortier, R.	Leahey, D.	Powe, Mrs. R.	Tilquist, H.
Fray, H.	Lineweber, J.	Perrault, R.	Turner, M.
	Lineweber, R.	Ploch, M.	

Urlick, S.	Vimer, R.	Wypler, G.	Walters, Miss. D.
		Wyckoff, J.	Wailonis, J.
von Wettberg, B.	Wheeler, S.	Wyckoff, Miss C.	Wailonis, J.
Vallas, H.	Wheeler, W.	Wilber, L.	Witek, J.
Viavoda, A.	Williams, A.		

"Victory Park.

Nine Oxford men and one woman lost their lives in Worls War II.

The idea of establishing a Victory Memorial Park between Route 67 and Chestnut Tree Hill Road, just south of Oxford Center as a memorial to Oxford's Dead in World War II. was first proposed by Oxford's Troop I, Boy Scouts of America in signed petitions sent to the Officers of the Connecticut State Highway Department and the Town of Oxford in May, 1946. The State and Town united in doing the necessary filling and grading, and in planting trees and shrubs. The Scouts assisted in the work and raised a fund for the purchase of the bronze tablet on which the names of the dead are inscribed. Dedication Exercises were held on Memorial Day May 30, 1947.

Introductory Address	Mr. Carl Eckstrom
Invocation	
"The Star Spangled Banner"	Mrs. Kenyon Congdon
Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag	
The Boy Scout Oath and Law	Led by Troop 1, Boy Scouts
"America the Beautiful"	Chorus, Boy and Girl Scouts (Mrs. R. Pulver, director)
Unveiling of Tablet to World War II. Dead	Scout John Congdon
Welcome and Presentation of Park and Tablet to Town Officials	Victor Ives Jr., Senior Patrol Leader
Acceptance of both	First Selectman Frederick R. Bice, Jr.
Dedication Prayer	Rev. Edwin G. Zellars, Pastor Oxford Congregational Church
Placing of Wreath at Tablet	Members of Oxford Post, Ameri- can Legion
"The Gettysburg Address"	Mr. Carl Eckstrom
"In the Garden"	Boy and Girl Scouts
"The Battle Hymn of the Republic"	Mr. Carl Eckstrom
Address	Lieut Col. Alfred G. Seitz
"America"	Chorus

Scout Benediction

Led by Rev. H. S. Douglas, Scout-
master of Troop 1, Boy Scouts

Taps

Bugler

THE BOY SCOUT COMMITTEE wishes to extend its thanks to its many friends:

To all who have contributed to the Memorial Fund.

To Mr. Reese Miles for moving the Boulder to its foundation.

To Mr. George Clark for building the foundation and for inserting the bronze tablet into the Boulder.

To Mrs. Margery Wilson Bushnell, Mr. George Clark, Mr. Thomas Schreiber and Mr. William Curtis for gifts of trees and shrubbery.

To Mr. Stephen B. Church for the gift of a permanent flag pole.

To Scout Edward Sands for a beautiful 5 by 8 American Flag.

The following Scouts worked as solicitors for the Memorial Fund:

Victor Ives Jr.	Edward Sands	George Richter
Florian Folger	Jack Micknak	Robert Dilley
Donald Gabianelli	Donald Micknak	Gordon Brooks
Stian Christiansen	Richard Ives	

The following Scouts have worked many hours in the Memorial Park:

Victor Ives Jr., Senior Patrol Leader

Donald Mickmak, Patrol Leader

Florian Folger, Patrol Leader

Gordon Brooks, Scribe

Donald Gabianelli, Asst. Patrol Leader

Stian Christiansen, Asst Patrol Leader

Richard Ives	Clarence Taradine	Robert Dilley	Otto Schaper
John Congdon	Herbert Morris	Neil Cockran	Henry Hummell
Edward Sands	Charles Hummell	Charles Tarby	Laurence Domrod
Earnest Cockran	George Richter		

Messrs. Joseph Gray, Troop Committeeman, and Earnest Cockran have worked many hours in developing the Park.

A bronze tablet is attached to a boulder, inscribed as follows,-

“Our Hero Dead
World War II

Sgt. David S. Miles

Pvt. Albert Vaivoda

Capt. Kenyon S. Congdon

1st. Lieut. Cornelia A. Wyckoff, M.D.

P.F.C. Edwin H. Cassidy

P.F.C. S. Robert O'Donovan

Pvt. Alvin H. Treat

S/Sgt. Louis F. Smith

P.F.C. Sidney A. Burt

P.F.C. Michael J. Stakum

Eternal rest grant unto them O Lord and let perpetual light shine upon them."

On the rear of the boulder, a bronze tablet reads,- "This park and monument was secured from funds collected by Troop I Boy Scouts of Oxford."

CHAPTER 29

THE AMERICAN LEGION AND AUXILIARY IN OXFORD

The American Legion in Oxford.

On Nov. 12, 1946, a group of veterans of World War No. II met at the Town Hall and discussed plans for the formation of a veterans' organization in Oxford. Bishop W. von Wettberg was selected interim chairman; Alexander Mikulich, acting Secretary, and Earl Oleson, Roger Mandato, Raymond Godshall, Paul Paradise and Michael Korin, members of the organization committee. On the following Dec. 16th. the Veterans' Group voted to affiliate with the American Legion and organize a Legion post in Oxford.

On Jan. 22d. 1947, officers were elected and a name selected, "The David S. Miles Post", in honor of Sergeant David S. Miles, (son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Miles of Chestnut Tree Hill), who lost his life on a transport that was torpedoed and sunk by enemy fire in the North Atlantic Ocean, Feb. 3, 1943. The officers elected were B. W. von Wettberg, Commander, Edward Dains, Vice Commander, Edward Miles, Financial Officer, and Alexander Mikulich, Adjutant.

Robert Lineweber was appointed Chairman of the House Committee, and Raymond Pope, Frank Oczkowski, Albert Douillet, Earl Oleson and Robert Miles, a Committee of Constitution and By-Laws.

On March 3, 1947, the Post was notified by the State Department of the Legion that it had granted a charter and assigned Post No. 174. At this point it seems appropriate to set forth the origin and some of the aims of the Nation-wide American Legion, as given in its Constitution, namely, that it is a patriotic, non-partisan organization of Veterans of World Wars I and II, incorporated by Act of Congress, Sep. 16, 1919; that it aims to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States, to foster a one-hundred percent Americanism, and to preserve the memories of the association of the Veterans in the Great Wars.

At the March 3d. meeting, the following 23 Members were initiated,-

Edward B. Dains	Charles Lyons	Raymond Pope
Albert Douillet	James Lyons	Benjamin Samoker
John Fritz	Alexander Mikulich	Robert Stanton
William Fox Jr.	Robert Miles	Harold Tilquist
Raymond Godshall	Edward Miles	Robert Treat
Arthur P. Hoyt	Wilson Miles	Harry Vallas
Everett Hubbell	Earl Oleson	Bishop W. von Wettberg
Robert Lineweber	Paul Paradise	

In addition to Commander von Wettberg, First Vice Commander Dains, Finance Officer Edward Miles, and Adjutant Mikulich, previously elected, six other offices were filled, Raymond Pope, Second Vice Commander, Robert Stanton, Chaplain, Harry Vallas, Historian, Albert Douillet, Service Officer, Robert Treat, Sergeant at Arms, and Benjamin Samoker, Assistant Sergeant at Arms. The officers were formally installed Apr. 2, 1947 at a meeting held in the Oxford Grange Hall.

From the start, the Legion took active part in Town Affairs, such as sponsoring high school boys attending Nutmeg Boys State at Wallingford; furnishing transportation to the polls on Election Day to those who wished it; co-sponsoring Oratorical Contests with the Seymour Post at Seymour High School. It has also given financial help to veterans and relatives needing it, and has provided consultation with people who wished assistance in filling out pension, insurance and other forms. It has also sponsored awards to the most outstanding boy and girl in the Oxford School. And since 1949, the Legion has taken over the Memorial Day Celebration program in Oxford.

On May 18, 1949, military funeral services were held by the Legion, for Private Alvin Harold Treat, (son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Harold Treat of Quaker Farms), large delegations being present from the David S. Miles Post and Auxiliary. Private Treat was killed in action Jan. 5, 1945 in the Battle of the Bulge. Interment was in Brookside Cemetery, Quaker Farms, where the veterans ritual was held at the grave. The flag which draped the casket was folded by the Commander of the Oxford Legion Post and the past commander, and presented to the military escort, who then gave it to the parents of the dead veteran. A salute to the dead was then fired.

Similar military honors were paid by the Post, June 17, 1949 at the funeral of Staff Sergeant Lewis F. Smith, (son of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert H. Smith of Oxford), who was killed in action at St. Omer Lonquesse, July 11, 1944.

On March 3, 1952 a permanent American Legion Charter was presented to the Oxford Post.

Awards for good citizenship are presented annually by the Post to a boy and a girl in the graduating class in the Oxford School and in 1953 the Post sponsored the providing of ambulance service to the residents of Oxford. Frequent social gatherings, banquets, dances etc. are held, and the welfare in general of veterans is fostered.

On June 5, 1950, the Town gave the Legion a Quit-claim Deed to the former Stephen B. Church property on Oxford Road, and the Legion now makes it its home. The Post has now 180 members.

The American Legion Auxiliary

In September 1947, a meeting was held in the Ration building in Oxford to discuss the forming of an Auxiliary Unit of the American Legion. Formal action was postponed until Feb. 23, 1948 when

fourteen women took the necessary steps to organize an Auxiliary and on March 5, 1948 a special meeting of the Post was held at which an application for a Charter of the new unit was drawn up, to be filed with the Central Office.

Officers were elected Apr, 28, 1948 and the Charter was received with a letter dated May 14, 1948 from the National President of the American Legion Auxiliary in Indianapolis. Formal installation of the officers took place May 24, 1948, as follows,-

Miss Eleanor Miles, President	Mrs. Lillie Lineweber, Treasurer
Mrs. Louise von Wettberg	Mrs. Viola Martin, Historian
Senior Vice President	Mrs. Florence Dains, Chaplain
Miss Harriet Miles	Mrs. Mary Moselle, Sergeant at
Junior Vice President	Arms
Miss Rose Rzesutek, Secretary	

The Charter Members of the Auxiliary, as listed in the records of the unit are,-

Mrs. June Behuniak	Miss Eleanor Miles
Mrs. Charlotte Cassidy	Miss Harriet Miles
Mrs. Florence Dains	Mrs. Susannah Miles
Mrs. Dorothy Draugelis	Mrs. Louise Paradise
Mrs. Sabina Hoyt	Mrs. Frances Samoker
Mrs. Isabell Hubbell	Mrs. Marion Samoker
Mrs. Henrietta Hummel	Mrs. Elizabeth Smith
Mrs. Jeanette Larson	Mrs. Anna Tilquist
Mrs. Ruth Larson	Mrs. Leila Treat
Mrs. Stephanie Larson	Mrs. Louise von Wettberg
Mrs. Charlotte Lyons	Mrs. Olive von Wettberg
Mrs. Viola Martin	Miss Rose Rzesutek.
Mrs. Mary Moselle (not included in the recorded list, but apparently should have been, as she was installed as Sergeant at Arms, May 24, 1948)	

The purposes and aims of the Auxiliary are much the same as those of the Post, acting to assist its work. It participates in social events, care of veteran's families, sponsors Laurel Girls State, Thanksgiving baskets for needy veterans, etc. An interesting part of the Auxiliary's work is in connection with the Scholarships granted annually by the State organization to boys and girls in memory of deceased past commanders. The Auxiliary takes care of selecting Oxford Boys and Girls, who by virtue of their scholastic stand and character are eligible to apply for a scholarship, and are children of veterans. The Auxiliary then notifies them that they are eligible and furnishes them with blank applications to fill out. The completed forms are then forwarded by the Auxiliary to the State Department for consideration, along with similar applications from boys and girls of other towns.

There are now fifty-six members.

CHAPTER 30

POST OFFICES, STORES, AND STAGES IN OXFORD

According to the records of the United States Post Office Department in Washington D.C., the Oxford Post Office (in Oxford Center) was established shortly before Jan. 1, 1807. A tradition, quoted by Judge Wilcoxson in his 1876 Centennial Address, names Daniel Candee as the first postmaster, but the U. S. Postoffice Department records say that it was Walker Wilmot, he being appointed on Jan. 1, 1807 and that he held the office until April 25, 1810. He was a brother-in-law of Daniel Candee.

The location of the first post office is uncertain. Judge Wilcoxson says that it was kept in the hotel building, known later as "Oxford house" on Oxford Road. Another tradition, held by some present older residents, is that it was held in the old John Twitchell House on the north side of Academy Road just west of Jack's Brook. It is known that on Dec. 11, 1807, Thomas Riggs sold the Twitchell house to Daniel, Job, Benjamin and Amos Candee, and Walker Wilmot. This, of course was nearly a year later than Wilmot's appointment as postmaster, and it is entirely possible that for this short period the post-office was in the hotel building and that on Dec. 11, 1807 it was moved to the store which was attached to Riggs' house. An argument has been voiced that the Post office could not have been located in the hotel building, because of a postal regulation prohibiting a post office from being held in a place where intoxicating liquors were sold. But the Government records in Washington show that that this regulation did not come into effect until 1873. So it would have been entirely possible for the post office to have been in the hotel building.

Still another tradition is held by members of old Oxford families that the first post office was located in what is now the old parish house of the Oxford Congregational Church, but there seems to be no evidence to sustain this idea, as in 1807, when the Oxford Post Office was instituted, this building was still the Masonic Hall and did not become the Parish House until much later.

The second postmaster was David Candee who was appointed April 25, 1810. He was the second operator of the hotel and Judge Wilcoxson says he had the postoffice there and held the postmastership for nearly twentythree years.

The third postmaster was George Candee, (son of David), he being appointed March 1, 1833. Judge Wilcoxson says he moved the

postoffice "to a merchant store". He held the position only about one year; then eight different postmasters followed until the appointment of Samuel P. Sanford Dec. 19, 1862, who is said to have held the postoffice in his house on the east side of Oxford Road about one quarter mile north of Academy Road until he built the store on the east side of Oxford Road about two hundred fifty yards north of Academy Road, some time prior to 1868, at which date it is shown on the Oxford map. The store was burned down in 1870 and was not rebuilt until 1875. No record has been found of the location of the post office during this five year period, but it is very likely that it was in the old Masonic Temple, later the parish house of the Congregational Church where it was later known to be.

S. P. Sanford was succeeded as Postmaster by Nathan J. Wilcoxson Oct. 2, 1867 who served until Aug. 4, 1869. He was followed by Charles H. Butler and Kate E. Butler for varying terms until Sep. 8, 1898. In the Premium list of the Oxford Agricultural Fair of 1881, Butler had an advertisement of his store "in the Post Office Building." The latter was the old Masonic Temple.

On Sep. 8, 1898, Thomas S. Osborn was appointed post master and held the post until March 10, 1903, when John Birdsey Sanford succeeded him and continued until the Oxford Post Office was discontinued July 14, 1903, because of the establishment of Rural Free Delivery.

The present Oxford Substation post office was opened Feb 2, 1959 in the store of Joseph J. Steinecker, on the west side of Oxford Road, just north of "Oxford House" with Mrs. Steinecker as Postmistress.

The Quaker Farms Postoffice was not established until eighty-four years after the Oxford Post Office, namely on May 1st, 1891. It was located in the house of Mr. Wallace G. Tomlinson, on Quaker Farms Road, at the north-west corner of that road and O'Neill Road, and Mrs. Tomlinson was the Postmistress. A man drove over to Southford once a day and got the mail, presumably from the New England Railway station there. One wonders what prompted the establishment of the Quaker Farms Post Office, probably because the road to Southford was level, compared to the hilly road to Oxford Center. This postoffice was discontinued Sep. 30, 1902 (some six months before the abandonment of the post office in Oxford Center), because of the establishment of Rural Free Delivery routes, one from Seymour and the other from Southbury.

The "Oxford" Rural Free Delivery Routes of 1959

On Saturday June 27, 1959, the Rural Free Delivery Routes in Oxford were rearranged, service from Southbury being discontinued, and the routes were renamed as follows,-

The former "R.F.D. 1 Seymour" became "R.F.D. 1 Oxford"

The former "R.F.D. 2 Seymour" and "R.F.D. 2 Southbury" were

consolidated into one route, named "R.F.D. 2 Oxford"

Both of the new routes operate out of the Seymour Post Office.

Zoar Bridge Post Office

In the locality of Oxford, then known as "Punkups", a post office was established at Zoar Bridge, April 6, 1827, (some twenty years after the opening of the Oxford post office). It was located in a little store at the east end of Zoar Bridge (over the Housatonic River) and the post office operated under the name "Zoar Bridge Post Office" until Aug. 31, 1863, when R. S. Hinman, proprietor of the "Pleasant Vale" Boarding School for boys, about one mile south of the bridge, removed the post office to the school and changed the name of the post office to "Pleasant Vale." There is a tradition that the removal of the post office from Zoar Bridge to the school was caused by an order of the U.S. Post Office Department prohibiting the location of a post office in a building where liquor was sold, (the same tradition as at Oxford), but as has been already pointed out, the Post Office Department's Regulation to that effect was not issued until 1873, so there may have been some other reason for the change, or it may have been the result of popular sentiment being against the combination of the post office and the store where liquor was sold.

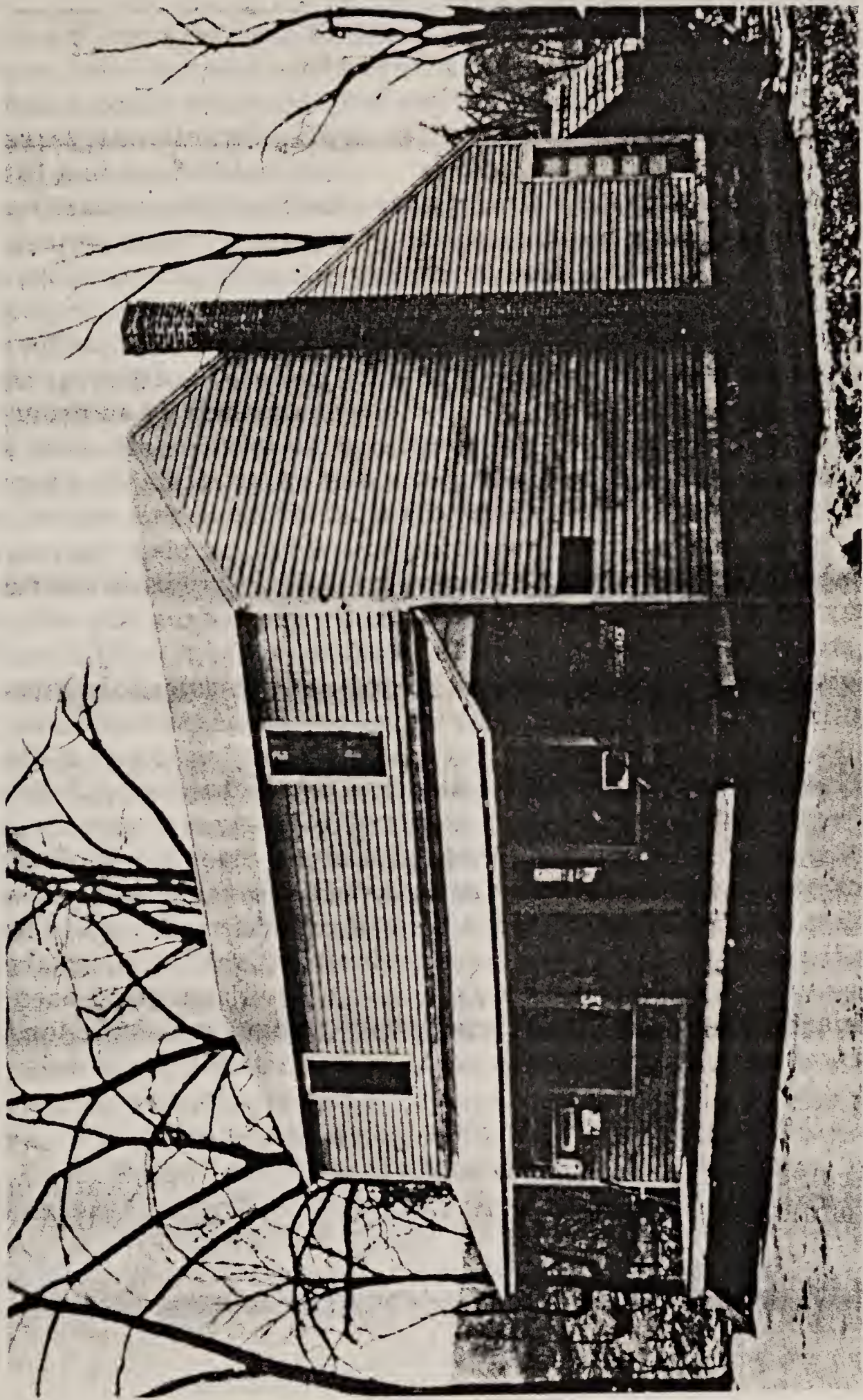
On Feb. 13, 1866, the name was changed to "Riverside", because the Post Office Department felt that the name "Pleasant Vale" was so nearly like "Pleasant Valley", in Litchfield County, as to cause confusion. Then on July 7, 1875, the name was again changed to Zoar Bridge "because there were some who preferred the old name". Finally the old post office on the east bank of the river known at various times as Zoar Bridge, Pleasant Vale, and Riverside was discontinued, Sept. 4, 1889 its place being taken by the Stevenson post office near the Housatonic Rail Road on the west bank of the river. Sharpe erroneously credits the building of the railroad with having caused the abandonment of the Zoar Bridge post office, an obvious error, for the railroad was built many years before, namely in 1840.

Southford Post Office

A post office was established in Southford about 1840 "located on the line of the New Haven and Litchfield Road" (Presumably Oxford Road), "John Peck being the first postmaster, and the mail was carried in a four horse coach, three trips a week."

Stores

The earliest known record of a store in Oxford indicates that it was located in the John Twitchell house on the north side of Academy Road just west of Jack's Brook. This house was later the rectory of St.



The Village Store of Sanford and Pope, - Now of J. J. Steinecker, and Oxford Rural P.O.

Peter's Episcopal Church. The store is mentioned in the deed by which John Twitchell sold the place to Enos Candee March 26, 1804, so that the store was in operation at that date, and may have been for many years before. John Twitchell was living in the house in 1741, and as he was then sixty seven years old it seems reasonable to suppose that he built it around 1720 or 1725 when he was forty five or fifty years old. If this is correct, then the store may be considered as being started at that time.

Enos Candee sold the house and store to Thomas Riggs in 1805, who sold them in 1807 to Daniel, Job, Benjamin and Amos Candee, and Walker Wilmot. In 1811, Job Candee bought the house and store from Daniel Candee and in 1812 sold them to Walker Wilmot. Wilmot sold them to Nathaniel Bacon in 1822 who in turn sold the house to Cyrus Humphrey, without any mention of the store, so it seems that the store was demolished by Bacon.

The Rev. Theodore Peck, Rector of St. Peter's Church, who lived in the house in 1903, wrote "The carpenters, (in making over the old house for use as a rectory) in taking off the clapboards from the west end found the opening of a door and plaster marks on the planks, showing that there was once a building attached to the west end of the main house, and which may have been the store.

From 1822 to 1851, the location of the village store is uncertain, but it seems likely that until 1833 it was in the hotel. In that year George Candee succeeded his father as postmaster and "moved the post-office to a merchant store".

David Candee died in 1851. His son, Frederic, Candee (brother of George Candee) "succeeded his father in the store business and ran it until December of 1857 when he became ill of consumption and was followed by Samuel P. Sanford who had been Frederick's clerk." Sanford's store is shown on the 1868 Oxford map on the east side of the Oxford road, about two hundred fifty feet north of Academy Road. The inference is that in 1833 there was a merchant store somewhere else than in the hotel and that the post office was moved to it in that year. Just where this store was is not definitely known, but it may have been the store which in 1857 became the property of Samuel P. Sanford. It is said to have burned down in 1870 and not rebuilt until 1875. S. P. Sanford ran the store from 1857 to about 1890 when his son Robert Irving Sanford took over. In 1911 or 1912, Mr. Charles P. Pope and J. Birdsey Sanford bought the business from R. I. Sanford. The building, which belonged to Miss Ruth Sanford, burned down in 1914, and Pope and J. B. Sanford bought the present store building. It

had formerly stood on the West side of Oxford Road about one hundred yards north of its present location, and had been used as a harness shop with an apartment-overhead. It was owned by S. P. Sanford who moved it to its present location and used it as a horse stable and carriage house; as did also his son R. I. Sanford. Charles P. Pope and J. B. Sanford bought the building from R. I. Sanford, and remodelled it as a store. They sold it later to Albert K. Pope who in turn sold it to J. J. Steinecker in 1921.

There was also a store at one time located in what had been the Masonic Temple building which later became the parish house of the Oxford Congregational church. The Masons gave up the building in 1847. Charles H. Butler became the post master Aug. 4, 1869 and he and Kate Butler held that post until Sep. 8, 1898, the postoffice being located in the old Masonic Temple. In the Premium list of the Oxford Agricultural Fair of 1881, there is an advertisement of his store as dealer in Dry goods, Groceries, Boots and Shoes, "in the Post Office Building".

Another store and tavern are said to have been operated "in the upper part of the village of Oxford" by Daniel Tucker.

In Quaker Farms there was a store located on the west side of Quaker Farms Road, a short distance north of and across the road from Christ Church. It was started by David Tomlinson who came to Quaker Farms about 1780. "He was a merchant, and as such, an extensive operator. He began in a small way and enlarged as he advanced, first occupying in the chamber of his dwelling as a sales room. He was remarkably successful as a merchant, his business being extensive beyond that of any other for many miles around." After his death in 1822, the store was operated by members of the Meigs family. Samuel Meigs married a daughter of David Tomlinson and had two sons, David T. and Charles A. Meigs who, says Judge Wilcoxson in 1876, "are merchants, occupying what was the stand of their grandfather."

The store burned down about 1887 or earlier, it being then operated by a man named Dexter.

The Stage Line

In 1883, one could go from Oxford to Seymour by the "Southford and Seymour Mail Wagon", which was advertised in the "Seymour Record", Dec. 14th of that year,-

"Will leave Southford Post Office at 7.30- Oxford at 8.10, arriving at Seymour in time for the 9 o'clock train. Will leave Seymour on the arrival of the 10.36 train, arriving in Southford in time for either the east or west bound train, on the New York and New England R.R. All orders left at either of the named post offices

will be promptly attended to. Fares from Southford to Seymour 25¢; Oxford to Seymour 15¢."

(Signed)

H. T. Edwards.

In the same issue of the "Seymour Record", Dec. 14, 1883 there was advertised also, "Church's Seymour and New Haven Stage", -

"Leaves Seymour at 7.45 A.M., arriving at New Haven at 9.45 Returning, leaves Down's Corner of Church and Court Streets (formerly Lockwood's City Hall Dining Rooms) at 2 o'clock.

Signed, Sheldon Church.

In 1901, a city dweller who had purchased a house in Oxford for a summer residence writes of the stage as follows, -

"I had feared at first to have to spend half my time hurrying to the market-town to provision my family. But quite to the contrary, the housekeeping has proved easier than in town. This is much due to the daily stage. Though a lumbering, slow conveyance for travel or for bringing one's friends out to the farm, it is a capital resource for procuring supplies. We signal it by a blue placard swung out of the window, and it stops under our maple tree by seven in the morning. The amiable driver takes a prepared list, and he is back again before noon, bringing say, meat from the butcher's, fruit and confectionery, a new broom and some cotton cloth, embroidery thread, light lumber and cans of paint, and a drum for the son of the house. For such miscellaneous shopping, his own charge is about ten cents."

The writer then begins to comment on the transportation facilities, which in 1896 made it possible for him to spend his summers in Oxford. This was the bicycle. Before its coming "you would have to hire a conveyance, which is expensive and not always feasible at any price, or you would have to buy a horse of your own. But with a bicycle, distance from the railway station was practically abolished. Our own station at Seymour, Conn. is something less than five miles from the farm. I make that in forty minutes going up, as it is a steady rising grade, but I come flying down in twenty five minutes." He ends by saying, - "We won our home, so to express it, by the bicycle, but we rather expect to have to hold it by the automobile, unless it be by the trolley, for already they talk of a link to connect the two systems, above and below us (presumably Southbury and Seymour).

He then asks a prophetic question, - "why will not some one bring out a motor carriage for two persons, costing not much above two

hundred dollars? Such a conveyance is bound to come sooner or later. Why not give it to us sooner and not later?" Little did he realize that as he wrote, in 1901, the Ford Motor Company was being organized to produce the "Model T." at a price not far above his price.

CHAPTER 31

THE OXFORD CHURCHES

The Oxford Congregational Church

We have already told of the formation of the new parish of Oxford, separate from that of Derby, in 1741. In May of that year "The Ecclesiastical Society of Oxford" was established by an act of the General Assembly. The first meeting of the society was held on June 30th, 1741, when it was voted "to hire a minister for the present year". For several years thereafter, until the meeting house was built, ministers were hired for one year periods "on probation". On Oct. 6, 1741, a society meeting was held to arrange for the erection of a meeting house, and on Oct. 20th. it was voted to build a meeting house 38 X 32 ft., with 19 ft. posts. A tax of twelve pence on the pound was levied for that purpose. But the new society was not strong financially and a lack of means prevented the beginning of building operations, and on Sep. 14, 1742, it was voted to apply to the General Assembly for a tax on the unimproved lands in the parish, both of residents and non-residents of sixpence on the pound for a space of four years, "that we may go on with building a meeting house and settling a minister".

"Encouraged by the prospect of financial help from the tax on unimproved lands-which the Assembly granted, it would appear that active work on this first meeting house was begun in the spring of 1743. That the frame had been raised and covered by summer is evident from the fact that the records for June 21, 1743 show that a meeting of the society was held "at the meeting house". Until that time, all society meetings had been held at the house of Samuel Twitchell. In September of 1743 it was voted to give to the meetinghouse committee the money of the first year's land tax for carrying on the building of the meeting house. But some fourteen years were to elapse before the structure could be brought to completion, it appearing probable that this first meeting house was finished in 1757, since in January of that year, a tax of one penny on the pound was levied "to finish the meeting house."

The dimensions given of this first meeting house, finished in 1757, namely 38 ft. X 32 ft. with 19 ft. posts, indicate that it was not of the very early style of New England meeting houses, which were generally square, and smaller and lower. It belonged rather to the second order,



Oxford Congregational Church, Academy Rd.



Carriage Sheds and Well at Congregational Church.

which looked like a two story dwelling house with a door on the wide side, a gable roof, and two rows of windows, one above the other. Conspicuously missing also, was a chimney, for no heat was provided in meeting houses until the 1800's. The second meeting house in Derby was like this. It had no tower nor steeple. Directly opposite the door, in the other long wall was a window, fairly high up, and in front of this was the pulpit, so that when the preacher stood in it light shone upon him from out of doors, so that he "stood in God's clear light of day." Access to the pulpit was by a flight of steps, and so, such a pulpit was known as a "staircase pulpit". And the records of the Oxford Society show that in 1748 it was voted "to build a pulpit."

"Votes concerning the building of additional pews appear on the records for the years 1784 and 1786, indicating a growing lack of room in the meeting house. This condition, no doubt led to a vote of the Society on Jan. 3, 1793, "to take into consideration the proposals for building a new meeting house." It was agreed that such a step was necessary. At a meeting later that same month it was voted to build a steeple (on the new house). Nearly a year elapsed, when on Dec. 23d. 1793, it was voted that the new structure should be 56 ft. long and 40 ft. wide. It is generally believed that this second meeting house was built in 1795, and that date is cut into one of the foundation stones."

The new meeting house was to be located on "the meeting house acre", very near the site of the old building. Thomas Clark, Esq., Capt. John Riggs, and Mr. Josiah Strong were appointed a committee to the Honorable County Court to establish a place for the same. Mr. Timothy Candee was appointed to build the meeting house for six hundred and seventy five pounds.

The new (and present) meeting house apparently was built originally with a square tower, springing from the ground, (and not from the roof as it does now). In the upper part of the tower was a belfry and bell, the whole topped by a steeple. This is evidenced by the following records of the Society,-

1. In January 1797 a committee was appointed "to inspect the repairing of the deck floor to the steeple", which proved to be a source of trouble for many years to come.
2. In December 1797, two men were appointed to purchase a bell and a year later, mention of ringing it appears in the records.
3. In November 1834 it was decided to remove the upper part of the steeple, due to decay in its timbers.
4. In 1835 the Society voted "to take down the four squares of the steeple to the ground, lower the pitch of the roof, and erect a cupola on the roof of the house." Although the vote was rescinded in February 1836, nevertheless the record gives a good picture of what the tower was like. In the same month it was voted to adopt

a plan "which is nearly in imitation of the House of the Methodist Society of Hamden Plains which was erected last summer". The tower and steeple were undoubtedly taken down at that time, and certainly no trace of them remains.

The interior of the building has also been changed, the old square pews being removed in April 1870 and the present "slips" installed. It is not clear just when the staircase pulpit was removed, but gone it is.

In his book, 'Early Connecticut Meeting Houses', J. Frederick Kelly* wrote of the present church, "The front of the building has been entirely remodeled in the Greek Revival style. The belfry has been entirely rebuilt and arises from the roof of the building and consists of three stages, the first a square tower, the second a square belfry, and the third a very short and hopelessly inadequate spire surmounted by a weather vane." He continues, "The interior of the building has had repeated and radical alterations, and not a single item of the original work remains".

To return now from the church building to the organization as a Congregational Society, a surprising action is recorded in 1742. It was voted that the meeting house (the first one of course) "shall be devoted to the Presbyterian ministry for ever". And at a subsequent meeting in the same year, it was voted "to go to Hartford to obtain liberty of settling a church according to the Presbyterian Constitution". By this action, one is tempted to conclude that the Oxford church was started as a Presbyterian Church in the modern sense of the word, rather than Congregational, but this is doubtful. This is borne out by the writers of the "History of the Old Town of Derby" who comment on a call made by the church in that town in 1733 to a minister. This call read "that he shall preach with us as our dissenting Presbyterian minister". The comment of the writers of the history is that "The word Congregational as applied to a denomination was then unknown, or so little known as to be unfamiliar in that sense". "And the common name of the old Puritan church was "The Church of Christ".

The strict basis of Congregationalism was that the church should have no bishop and no interchurch organization. But by 1708 the old Puritan churches were in a bad way and it was felt in New England that something should be done to hold the churches together. So the General Court of Connecticut, in that year, called a Synod of the forty one churches of Connecticut to meet at Saybrook. This Synod drew up a statement which has become known as "the Saybrook Platform", and as it was somewhat akin to Presbyterianism (which favored a strong organization) the names "Presbyterian" and "Congregational" became somewhat interchangeable. It is known that at the time of the founding of the Oxford church, Congregationalism was strong in Massachusetts while Connecticut favored "Presbyterianism".

* Columbia Univ. Press

It was the time of the religious revival known as "The Great Awakening" which began in December 1734 when Jonathan Edwards was preaching throughout New England. By 1740, the movement was at its height, and it may have influenced the Oxford Society in voting for a church "according to the Presbyterian Constitution". The name "Presbyterian" persists in the Oxford church records, for at a meeting held in December of 1819, it was voted to have "a minister of either the Presbyterian or Congregational Order". Another record of the same kind is found in "Dwight's Travels", published in 1822, which says, "Oxford includes two congregations, a Presbyterian and an Episcopal plurality", (the latter term referring to St. Peter's and Christ Church). And a map of Oxford in an atlas of New Haven County published in 1868 shows a Presbyterian church at the location of the present Congregational church. All of these seem to indicate that the Oxford Church has at least always favored an interchurch organization. But mortgages dated as early as 1812 speak of "The Ecclesiastical Congregational Society of Oxford".

We have already stated that at first there was no settled minister. At the beginning, in 1741 the meeting voted to give a Mr. Buckingham a "call upon probation", and in 1744 they did the same for a Mr. Davlin. In August of the same year they voted to give Mr. Joseph Adams a call "upon probation for three Sabbaths". Finally, in 1745 they voted to give Mr. Jonathan Lyman a call to preach. Mr. Lyman apparently won their hearts, for on the first Monday of July of that year, they voted "to give the worthy Mr. Lyman a call to settle over the parish in the work of the gospel ministry".

The word "settling" meant that the minister was there to stay. This was a serious move for a church to make, "as at his installation he was given a home and land, received a stated salary, small though it often was, and sometimes, in addition, a sum of money to induce him to settle. Each parish took its time about selecting its pastor, minutely investigated his life, character, and training, carefully tested his theology, and was deeply concerned over the method of his ordination and installation".

Mr. Lyman stayed with the Oxford church for eighteen years until his death in 1763, when he was killed by a fall from his horse. After Mr. Lyman, the next settled minister was the Rev. David Bronson who was installed Apr. 25, 1764 and his pastorate continued until his death in 1806. It was during his ministry that the new meeting house was built.

The next settled minister (after Mr. Bronson, who died in 1806) was the Rev. Nathaniel Freeman, whose tenure was from June 1809 to September 1814. After that, the Society was without a settled minister

sixteen years, during which various ministers "supplied" with preaching, principally the Rev. Ephraim G. Swift who is said to have been of much personal worth, and highly respected. Then, on June 2d 1829, the Rev. Abraham Brown was settled, and served until he was "dismissed" Oct. 16, 1838. (Here it should be noted that the word "dismissed" meant at that time merely that the minister was thereby freed from all contractual obligation, and did not mean "fired").

During Mr. Brown's pastorate, namely in 1833, it was voted that the town of Oxford be permitted to hold all necessary town meetings in the society's house for one year, the town to pay \$12. Next after Mr. Brown came the Rev. Stephen Topliff who was called April 21, 1841, but for some unknown reason was not installed until the following September. He remained for twenty years (to 1861). Judge Wilcoxson says of him, "He was a man esteemed for his integrity, for his faithfulness in the discharge of his personal duty, his kindness as a neighbor, and the wisdom of his actions as a citizen". Truly, high praise, and it would seem that Mr. Topliff must have been one of the leading men of Oxford.

After Mr. Topliff, there was no settled minister for about two years, the pulpit being supplied by several men,- Rev. Mr. Hollister, Oct. 17 to Dec. 30, 1860, Rev. Mr. Barton Jan. 1, 1861 to May 1, 1862, and from that date to Aug. 1862 by the Rev. Messrs H. D. Woodruff, John S. Hannah, Burrit Smith and Mr. Day. They were followed by the Rev. Jacob Strong, who commenced in August 1862, but was not installed until Feb. 11, 1863. He continued for two and a half years, at the end of which time the Society voted that he should hand in his resignation "at an early date". The records are discreetly silent about the reason for this drastic action. He was dismissed on June 28, 1865.

From that date to Jan. 1, 1867 the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. Messrs. Brace, Atwater, Day, Hatch, and Burritt Smith, and the Rev. Charles Chamberlain preached from Jan. 1, 1867 to July 1, 1869. He was hired from year to year for about two and one half years. By this time the Society had increased the minister's salary to \$800. per year.

After Mr. Chamberlain, the church got along without any settled minister for seven years, but was well "supplied" by the Rev. John Churchill of Woodbury, who is described as a man "who, faithful to his calling; as a preacher, deservedly ranks with the ablest; as a friend, the kindest; as a neighbor, unselfishly loving; and as a citizen, discreet, just and true." Like Mr. Topliff, he must also have been one of the neighborhood's principal men.

Towards the end of Mr. Topliff's ministry, namely in 1860, the records mention the playing of the melodeon. This was a big step forward in the rendition of the music, as for some curious reason any form of organ seems to have been frowned down upon in early years.

Mr. Churchill's seven years supply ended in 1876, and from that time until 1879, the pulpit was supplied by the Rev. Messrs R

(indecipherable), Bilder, Ives, Johnson, Dodson and John Churchill. For the next two years, it seems to have been a struggle to keep the church open, some services being held by lay readers and on one Sunday no service was held. On two Sundays in 1877, the Rev. Mr. St. John preached, and other preachers were the Messrs. Swing, Waite and Seeley.

Things then became better, and the Rev. Frederick E. Snow commenced Oct. 20, 1878 but was not ordained and installed until Apr. 21, 1880. He was dismissed July 30, 1883. Then followed another period of "supply" to Jan. 6, 1884 by the Rev. Messrs. Lum, Miller, Duncan, Spaulding, Billman, Izell, Hubbard and Peck, and still more "supply" to May 1, 1885 by the Rev. Messrs. U. O. Mohr, Bowden and Robert Bell.

The Rev. James Bradford Cleavland commenced to preach Sep. 27, 1885 and after preaching six Sundays was hired for one year, and he moved his family to Oxford Dec. 1, 1885. On Dec. 1, 1886 he was hired for another year and the record says "as we commence the year 1888 he is still preaching for us." And he presided over a meeting Jan. 5, 1888. On July 15th, at his own request, he was "dismissed" and recommended to the "United Church of Christ in New Haven." Whether he was not available, because of illness or otherwise is not clear, but there were no services in April 1888 (although a Sunday School was held "each Sabbath") The Rev. Messrs Gantle, Reid and Hazeltine "supplied", some Sundays in May and June. On June 16th. 1888 the church voted "to hire Mr. Hazeltine, if possible, "and on July 1st. he was engaged as pastor for one year. (It may be noted that the rather harsh word, "hired", which had been in use for so many years, was beginning to be discarded, and the word "engaged", substituted.) Mr. Hazeltine continued as pastor until January 1893, when he resigned because of ill health. During his ministry the ladies had the stove pipes carried up into the galleries (thus giving the galleries some heat), and they calcimined and papered the interior walls, and re-carpeted the floors. And in 1890 they purchased new pulpit furniture, consisting of desk, three chairs and a communion table.

After Mr. Hazeltine resigned, the Rev. J. W. Norris was engaged for the year 1893. He resigned in May 1894 and was succeeded by the Rev. L. P. Armstrong. On Oct. 22, 1896 an ecclesiastical council was held at the Congregational Church in Oxford to examine him, and if expedient, ordain him to the Christian ministry. After examination of Mr. Armstrong, the ordination service was held.

The church records show that he was quickly followed by the Rev. Ansel E. Johnson. They also show that a Mr. E. A. Johnson was ordained in the church April 22, 1897. Presumably A. E. Johnson and E. A. Johnson were one and the same man. As the man who was ordained was a member of the Oxford church, and the account in the church record book gives in some detail the form prevailing at that time we quote from it as follows:

“Pursuant to letters missive, an Ecclesiastical Council assembled at the Cong. Church in Oxford on April 22d, 1897 at 11 A M on request of the Cong. Church in Oxford for the purpose of examining of E. A. Johnson to the Christian ministry.

The council was called to order by Rev. H. A. Campbell of Seymour, who read the letter missive calling the council together. Rev. F. N. Hollister of Waterbury was chosen temporary scribe of the roll of members of the Council and found it to be as follows:

Name of Church	Pastor	Delegate
Saugatuck	Sherwood Soule	L. D. Warner
Prospect	Wm. H. Phipps	
Seymour	H. A. Campbell	E. A. Lum
Thomaston 1st		E. C. Stoughton
Waterbury 2nd	F. N. Hollister	H. N. Keeler
Waterbury 3rd		S. N. Chapman
Litchfield	F. L. Grant	

The Rev. Prof. L. O. Bogston of New Haven
The Rev. L. P. Armstrong, of Brooklyn, N. Y.
Rev. Sherwood Soule of Saugatuck was chosen moderator and the temporary scribe was made permanent scribe of the Council.
The Council was led in prayer by Rev. L. P. Armstrong, former pastor of the Oxford Church.

The Candidate stated that he was a member of the Oxford church and presented his certificate of Licensure. He then made a statement as to his religious experience and his call to the ministry. Additional facts as to his home life and Christian training were brought out by questions asked by members of the Council.

A paper stating the theological belief of the Candidate was read, and further examination by the members of the Council was thorough and interesting, touching upon the questions of the Personality and Divinity of Christ, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the sense in which Christ is a fulfillment of prophecy, the meaning and design of Punishment and who may partake of the Lord’s Supper.

The Council being then by itself and the examination of the Candidate being deemed highly satisfactory, it was voted to proceed to the public services of ordination.

A Committee consisting of the Candidate, the Scribe and Rev. F. L. Grant was appointed to arrange a program of services of ordination and reported the program below after which it was voted that at the close of the program presented the Council adjourned, sine die.

The report of the scribe was then read and approved.

Services of Ordination

Hymn

Introductory Prayer

Rev. F. L. Grant

Reading of Scriptures

" F. N. Hollister

Hymn

Sermon

Rev. Prof. L. O. Bogston

Ordaining Prayer

Rev. Sherwood Soule

Right Hand of Fellowship

H. A. Campbell

Charge to the Pastor

Rev. L. P. Armstrong

Hymn

Prayer

Rev. W. H. Phipps

Benediction

Rev. A. E. Johnson

Rev. Sherwood Soule

Moderator

F. N. Hollister, Scribe"

The Rev. Mr. Johnson was followed May 1, 1897 as pastor by the Rev. Grant L. Shaeffer, who served from 1898 to 1904. About 1903 the church arranged a parsonage for him by taking over the old Masonic Hall and building an addition to it at the north side. He seems to have been well thought of, as is evidenced by the following resolution which was passed upon his resignation,-

"Whereas the Rev. Grant L. Shaeffer for nearly seven years, the acting pastor of the First Congregational Church in Oxford, Conn. has in the providence of God deemed best to accept a call to service with another church, there be it resolved:

That we desire to express our appreciation of the services of Mr. Shaeffer----and to bear testimony to his zeal and fidelity---to his efficient leadership, his capable ministry, his stimulating preaching, his upright and sympathetic life as a man, minister and citizen and to our sense of loss sustained in his departure from us. etc. etc."

From October 1904 to about August 1905, the acting pastor was the Rev. George L. Patterson, who then left for the West. During September 1905 a former pastor, the Rev. John W. Norris ministered to the church and on Oct. 8, 1905 the Rev. J. E. Kirkpatrick began his ministry, also engaging in Graduate Study in Yale Theological School.

During the year 1908 the Society acquired, partly from funds given by Mrs. R. B. Limburner, the Dr. Barnes property and occupied the same as a parsonage. The former parsonage thus became available to remodel or use as a parish house. After 1908 no record was found until 1917 when a list of marriages was reported by The Rev. G. E. Leiper, followed by the record in 1919 of a marriage solemnized by the Rev. Mr. Stuart. A call for a church meeting, Apr. 15, 1923 is signed, "Elijah Sawyer, Pastor." Then the record continues, "In 1924,

services were resumed, Mr. Jones, from Yale College being engaged for the Spring and Fall Months.

The Rev. Edwin G. Zellars became pastor in 1937, and in 1943 it is recorded that sixteen members of the church were serving overseas or in this country in the armed forces in the second World War. The 150th. Anniversary of the building of the Second (present) meeting house, and the 204th. Anniversary of the formation of the Society was celebrated with appropriate ceremonies, on July 15, 1945.

Towards the end of Mr. Zellars' ministry, namely in 1948, a proposal was made for the merging of the Evangelical and Reformed and Congregational churches of the United States. This proposal was laid before the Society for its consideration but was voted against because of the incomplete form in which it was presented.

In 1946 a garage was built back of the parsonage the builder of which was given the church's property on the far (east) side of the brook (Jack's) in exchange for his labor, and in 1948 the present heating system was installed.

Mr. Zellars resigned Nov. 26, 1949, becoming Pastor Emeritus, and the Rev. Kenneth Johnston followed as student pastor for a short period, January to June 1950.

He was succeeded by the Rev. Robert Eversull who resigned in June 1952, and the Rev. James A. Bradford was installed as a two year student at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, and May 30th, 1954 he was installed as full-time minister, and Ordained in the church June 27, 1954.

During Mr. Bradford's pastorate an historical step was taken by the church. On Nov. 30 1953 the old Ecclesiastical Society, which had governed the church's affairs since its creation in 1741, was formally dissolved. All property etc. was transferred to "The Oxford Congregational Church" which was officially incorporated under the laws of the State of Connecticut, on Dec. 18, 1953.

Mr. Bradford resigned Sep. 29, 1955, and in that year a Building Committee was formed to consider the possibility of building a new parish house. After Mr. Bradford's resignation, the Rev. James A. Glass served as Interim Pastor until Apr. 29, 1956 when the Rev. James A. Farmer was called.

In 1957 a Parish House Building Study Committee, a Building Committee, and a Building Fund Project Committee were appointed and a total of \$41,000 was pledged by the parishioners. Mr. Carl Blanchard of New Haven was employed as architect, and the new building was erected. The Rev. Mr. Farmer resigned in 1959 and was followed by the Rev. David C. Hall, called on Jan. 1, 1960 and installed as pastor Feb. 21, 1960. He was ordained at the same service.



Christ Church P. E. Quaker Farms Rd.

The Old Parish House of the Oxford Congregational Church.

The "Old Parish House" (still standing at the northeast corner of Oxford Road and Academy Road) consists of two parts, the southern part being of the "Greek Revival" style of architecture, (the same as the present, second, Meeting House), and the northern part being an "el" which has a piazza with posts and railing, all of "Queen Anne" architecture.

The southern part was built for the "Morning Star (Masonic) Lodge No. 47" for use as a Masonic Hall. The Lodge was instituted Oct. 18, 1804. It was occupied by the Lodge until 1848, when because of the decline of population in Oxford, the Lodge removed to Seymour. The building continued to be shown as "Masonic Hall" as late as 1868, appearing as such on the map of that date of Oxford Center.

From about 1870 to 1903 it is thought to have been used as a store and U. S. Post Office. In 1903 the Oxford Post Office was discontinued. In 1898, the Rev. G. L. Schaeffer became minister and about 1903 the Congregational Church took Masonic Hall for use as a parsonage, and added the "el" and piazza at the north end. Mr. Schaeffer is said to have declared that he was never able to use the piazza, because of the drinking going on at the Hotel across the way. The building continued to be used as a parsonage until 1908, when an item appears in the church record book, - "During the year, the Society acquired, partly from funds given by Mrs. R. B. Limburner, the Dr. Barnes property and occupied the same as a parsonage. The former parsonage thus becomes available to remodel as a parish house." (The Dr. Barnes property is the present parsonage on the Green at the southeast corner of Oxford Road and Academy Road, it being shown as Dr. Barnes' residence on the 1868 map of Oxford Center.)

The Oxford Episcopal Churches.

The first Episcopal Church in Oxford was St. Peter's in Oxford Center. It was founded in 1764 by the Rev. Richard Mansfield, rector of St. James Church, Derby, as a mission of that church. He was born in New Haven in 1724 and was ready to enter Yale College at the age of thirteen, but was not allowed to enter, because of his youth, until he was fourteen, in 1738. After graduation from Yale in 1741 he went to London so as to be ordained as an Episcopal minister. He must have come with high recommendations, for he was ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Church of England. This action apparently shocked his family, for his sister, upon hearing that he had sailed for England to receive ordination from the bishops, prayed that he might be lost at sea (as many men were). Her prayer illustrates the degree of Puritan bitterness against the Episcopal Church which prevailed at that time in New England.



St. Peter's Church P. E. Oxford Center.

The church of England had sometime previously formed a missionary society, known as "The Society for Propogating the Gospel in Foreign Parts", and Mr. Mansfield received appointment as one of their missionaries and returned to this country, taking up his post at Derby in 1749. A post is hardly the word for it, as his parish extended as far as New Haven and Waterbury, requiring much travel on foot or on horseback, the roads not being fit for vehicles. He was forty years old and thus in the full vigor of the prime of life. He is said to have been a man of indomitable zeal and energy, which certainly must have been true, in order for him to cope with his difficulties.

While St. Peter's Church was founded in 1764, land for the church building was not acquired until 1766, when Joseph Davis sold to the church a plot of some five acres "known by name of Meeting House lot, lying near Oxford Meeting house." This plot is presumably the present St. Peter's Cemetery on Governor's Hill Road, and the original church building was probably erected in 1767 at the south west corner of the plot., Its site is definite, as all of the grave stones there are dated after 1834 (the date when the old church was demolished), whereas it is surrounded by stones of an earlier date. A slight depression is visible at the site about 30 by 40 ft., indicating that the building was about that size.

In 1834, the old church building was torn down and a new building erected at its present location on the west side of Route 67 on the Lower Green. An artist's sketch made in 1838 shows that it was of "Gothic" architecture, about as it is to-day, except that it had a rather tall, square tower, instead of the present pointed structure. A tower was specified in the building contract, same as in the artist's sketch. It is not on record, at what date the tall tower was taken down.

With a strong Congregational Society already in existence in Oxford, the question may well be raised, how did it happen that in about twenty years from the founding of that church, Episcopal services had begun to be held in some Oxford homes (1760) and that St. Peter's was founded in 1764? One reason was undoubtedly that there were a number of Episcopal families who had come to live in Oxford by that time and who, like their Congregational neighbors, balked at traveling down to Derby for church each Sunday. One of these was that of Joseph Davis, who in 1766 deeded to the Church of England people in Oxford, the so-called "Meeting House Lot". Others were Abel Gunn, William Bunnel, Arthur Wooster, Abel Wooster and Benjamin Bates.

The other and perhaps the strongest influence was the missionary zeal of Mr. Mansfield, for there seems never to have been any thought of Oxford having a settled minister of its own, and surely no man would want to undertake to be such a charge, out of Derby, unless he had within him a burning evangelical fire.

As an instance, it is recorded that "on one Sunday Mr. Mansfield appointed to preach and hold a baptismal service in Oxford, and weeks

previous rains fell in torrents, the streams were greatly swollen and bridges swept away; but, mounting his horse in the morning, around gullied roads, through lots and travelling eight miles out of his way to cross the Naugatuck River, he reached Naugatuck, and found his little flock waiting his arrival. This he considered no hardship in the line of duty.

Dr. Mansfield was very familiar with his laymen, who loved him as a father, and always provided "something good" when he came among them. Visiting a farmhouse one day in Oxford, the wife had prepared him a meal with the luxury of coffee, sweetened, as was common those days, with molasses, "fretted in". Passing his cup for more sweetening, the good lady said "La me, parson, this coffee would be none too good for you if it was all 'lasses."

In person, he was tall, venerable and commanding, and it is said of him for fifty years, he scarcely changed the cut or color of his garments, which were the small clothes and shoes. He wore a large white wig, surmounted with a broad, flat brimmed hat.

"Prior to the organization of the Congregational Society for winter preaching at Great Hill, in 1779, the Rev. Dr. Mansfield of Derby, (the Episcopal minister) had held services some years in Great Hill school house, once a month, and the same at Oxford and Quakers Farm."

In 1792, at the age of 68, he received the degree of Doctor of Divinity. He died in 1821, aged 97.

As to the sympathies of the Church of England people in Oxford, during the Revolution whether patriot or loyalist, there is not a great deal on record. The rector of St. Peter's Church before and during the Revolution, was its founder, the Rev. Richard Mansfield, whose main charge was the church in Derby, where his home also was. During this period, he labored under the same difficulties which beset all the other Anglican clergymen, one of the chief of which was that they had sworn to use the "Book of Common Prayer" in their daily services, including Sunday. This book was the same as the English Prayer Book and it contained extreme expressions of loyalty to the King.

It is reported that "Dr. Mansfield encountered troubles during the Revolution, when at one time he was forced to flee to Long Island for a time because of objection to his devotion to the English crown, but he returned shortly to resume his labors and as one historian states, "Dr. Mansfield's sympathy with the cause of the crown was forgotten in the piety and zeal he manifested toward his church, his devotion to his people, and the meek but dignified deportment he exhibited towards all who entertained different religious views from himself."

At a church convention which was held July 23, 1776 (only 19 days after the Declaration of Independence), in New Haven, the clergy decided to close their churches. From 1775 to 1778, the old Record Book of St. Peter's Church in Oxford contains no word of either parish

or vestry meetings and it may be that during that period, the church was closed.

From its organization in 1764 to the beginning of the Revolution some of the men prominent in the affairs of that church were,-

Abel Gunn, William Bunnell, Thomas Wooster, Samuel Hawkins, Arthur Wooster, Benjamin Bates, Thomas Osborne, Lt. Jonathan Lum, Capt. John Wooster, Mr. John Twichel, Isaac Nichols and Ezra Foot.

However there has not been found any record indicating that any of these men were loyalists, but if any were, they probably followed the conservative advice and position of Dr. Mansfield, for in 1779, St. Peter's Church seems again to have been fully organized. On April 5th of that year, a meeting was held at which Ebenezer Wooster was elected parish clerk, Messrs. Thomas Osborn, John Twichel, John Wooster and Joseph Twichel a Committee to take care of "the Gleeb and the interest of the church". Messrs Samuel Hawkins and Isaac Nichols were elected Church Wardens, and Messrs. Isaac Nichols, Daniel Johnson and Benjamin Twichel "Coresters".

(The Gleeb or more properly "Glebe" was the real estate owned by the church, and the "interest", that which was paid on funds loaned by the church).

It will be remembered that in February of 1778, the treaty of alliance with France had been signed and the British had transferred the war to the South. In general, things looked much brighter for the American cause, and perhaps by that time the bitterness between patriots and loyalists in the locality had died down.

Right through the Revolution, Dr. Mansfield continued in charge of St. Peter's Church, working out of Derby, but by 1800, he had reached the age of 76, and in that year the church made its first attempt to get a settled minister. These efforts were continued for six years without avail, but on Jan 5, 1807, a call was given to the Rev. Chauncey Prindle, which he accepted, and he continued as rector until his resignation in December of 1811.

About this time, complaints were voiced by the Episcopalians living in Quaker Farms, as to the difficulty of getting to Oxford every Sunday. After Mr. Prindle had left, in 1811, St. Peter's Church was without a rector until 1814 and during this interim period, an agreement was reached between the Episcopalians of Quaker Farms and those of Oxford that a chapel could be built in Quaker Farms provided that the people of Quaker Farms paid for it and without St. Peter's Church being taxed for its support. It was also agreed that the parent church and the chapel were to remain united, and that the minister was to preach in both buildings, dividing his time in proportion to the number of Episcopalians in each district.

But apparently there were not sufficient Episcopalians in Quaker's Farm to carry all the burden of the erection of the new building, and the building committee consisting of David Tomlinson, Nathaniel

Wooster, Wells Judson and Russel Nichols, therefore obtained subscriptions from other residents in Quaker's Farm who were not Episcopalians, on the basis that the new building should be a sort of community church. There does not seem to be any record whether any ministers other than Episcopalian ever officiated in the new building. It seems as if it would have been an unworkable arrangement, and it may be that the chapel was never so used.

The Committee employed as architect-builder of the new edifice, George Boulton of Southford, Conn. who enjoyed the reputation of being "a gentleman of extraordinary skill in the art of building". Another writer says of him, "that he was one of the best builders of his time, and most skillful as a joiner", (a joiner was one who made the wood-work for finishing houses, especially the interior). His wife was Dorcas, daughter of Jeremiah and Eunice (Bronson) Johnson, of Woodbury.

The design of the tower and of the interior, particularly the galleries, show marked originality and in a pamphlet published during the Connecticut Tercentenary, the church is rated as one of the six or eight most interesting in Connecticut.

There is a tradition in Quaker Farms, that David Tomlinson, as chairman of the building committee, promised five gallons of rum to the man who got the first main stick of timber on the ground, and that the very same night saw the timber being hauled to the site. Cyrus Perry wrote in his diary that he drew the first stick of timber 64 ft. long, but he neglected to record whether he got the rum. However, he probably did so, for account books of the building of old houses show rum for the work-men to have been one of the chief items of expense.

After the resignation of Mr. Prindle in 1811, it has been said that he was succeeded by the Rev. Tillotson Bronson D.D., "but there was no official record of his service as rector, but he may have "officiated" from time to time. He was principal of the Episcopal Academy in Cheshire at the time, which would seem to make any extended service in Oxford unlikely.

The next definitely settled minister was the Rev. Aaron Humphrey; he was to receive \$500.00 annually and 20 cords of wood. It was agreed that the section of the town in which he made his residence should provide $\frac{2}{3}$ of the wood. He came first to the church in Quaker's Farm in the Fall of 1814, apparently when it was just completed, and lived in that district, and it was not until the Spring of 1816 that he took charge of St. Peter's also, and at that time he moved to Oxford. Soon thereafter, on Oct. 1st, 1816, St. Peter's Church (on Governor's Hill) was consecrated by Bishop Hobart of New York, who at that time was temporarily in charge of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut.

The next Fall, the Chapel was consecrated, Sep 3, 1817, by Bishop Hobart. The churches had a hard time paying the rector's salary, and a number of members left the church.

Mr. Humphrey resigned June 1, 1820, and on June 26th of the next year, 1821, was succeeded by the Rev. Beardsley Northrop who continued for two years. Then the Rev. J. M. Garfield of New Haven "officiated" for a year and was followed by the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, D.D. in a temporary engagement 1824-25. It will be seen later that after some years he returned to Oxford.

Then in 1826, when the churches were again without a rector, a church meeting was held July 26th, at which the church in Quaker Farms, withdrew from the St. Peter's ecclesiastical society and decided to form a new, separate society in Quaker Farms. The separation became legally effective in June of 1827, when the Episcopal Diocesan Convention, received Christ Church, Quaker Farms into union with the Diocese of Connecticut.

Notwithstanding the official separation of the two churches a good part of the time, from then to the present day they have had the same minister. Some notable men served as rector in their declining years. One of these was the Rev. Ashbel Baldwin, who was one of the most distinguished clergymen in the Diocese at the time of his call to Oxford. He had held nearly every position in the gift of the Diocese, and had been rector of Christ Church, Stratford, one of the most important charges in the State.

He first came to Oxford in 1824, having just resigned from the charge of the church in Stratford. He stayed in Oxford but one year, resigning to go to Meriden. However, he returned to Oxford in 1831, in charge of both parishes until 1834, when he resigned and retired from active ministry because of advancing years and failing eyesight.

Another prominent clergyman, was the Rev. Daniel Burhans. He was probably one of the most interesting men who served the Episcopal Churches in Oxford. He came to St. Peter's in 1836 being then about 73 years old. He had been Rector of Trinity Church, Newtown for 31 years, and later Rector of St. Peter's Church, Plymouth, Conn. He had been very active in Diocesan affairs and honored with many offices.

Sometime in 1835 or 1836, Christ Church, Quaker Farms apparently tried to have a full time rector separate from St. Peter's and had made an effort to build a parsonage. They called the Rev. James Sunderland who served 1836-37, but then Christ Church found that it could not support a minister alone, and in 1839, Dr. Burhans took charge of both churches. He is said to have been a man of commanding personal appearance. But in 1840, he reported "that he had become convinced of his inability to discharge the duties of his office, he therefore closed his ministerial labors". Then again, Christ Church tried to go it alone but once more found it impractical.

A succession of short tenures followed until 1868, when the Rev. John T. Pearce, took charge of both parishes, but only served Christ Church from 1863-65. He continued, however, to serve St. Peter's through 1872. Little is known of him.

Both churches had a hard struggle to keep open for many years, but in 1877, Christ Church, Quaker Farms, began to be served by a remarkable man, the Rev. Sheldon Davis, who continued to "officiate" on into 1882. In his younger life, he had worked as a missionary among the Indians of New York State, and had written an historical volume on the Indians and the work of the Moravians among them. As a boy, he had lived in the old Russel Tomlinson house on Great Hill Road in Seymour. About 1872, he returned to Seymour, and officiated in different parishes. He and the Hon. Stephen Mallett (then living in the house directly opposite to Christ Church, Quaker Farms) set up an endowment fund for Christ Church, still existing, and known as the Davis-Mallett fund.

In 1882, the Rev. S. R. Bailey became rector of both St. Peter's and Christ Church, serving until 1885. Then, after being two years without a rector, the Rev. Lewis F. Morris took charge of both churches, St. Peter's in 1887 and Christ Church in 1888, and continued as rector until 1897. He served as Chairman of the Town School Visitors in 1896, and as Chairman of the Board of Education in 1897, rendering forceful reports on the condition of the schools and the status of education in Oxford, which we quote at some length in the chapter on "Schools".

He was followed at St. Peter's by the Rev. A. R. Balsley, Christ Church being vacant. Then came the Rev. Wm A. Woodford who had charge of both churches, 1899-1900. His post-office address was "Quaker Farms", indicating that he resided there, whereas most of the previous rectors had lived in Oxford Center, although there was no rectory owned by the Episcopal Churches.

Mr. Woodford's successor, the Rev. W. Sturtevant Rafter, rector of both churches 1900-1902, like Mr. Woodford, resided in Quaker Farms, Mr. Rafter giving as a reason for so-doing, that "Christ Church is the more wealthy of the two parishes, and therefore has a greater claim on the minister's services".

Mr. Rafter was followed by the Rev. Theodore M. Peck, rector of both churches, 1902-1905. In 1903, St. Peter's Church bought, for use as a rectory, the old Twitchell house on the north side of Academy Road just west of Jack's Hill Brook.

The Rev. George J. Sutherland, rector of both churches, had one of the longer rectorates, eight years, 1906-1914. He lived at the rectory on Academy Road.

Then came a long period of fourteen years, 1914-1928, when both parishes were without a settled minister, services however being held by several divinity students, acting as "Lay Readers", and occasional services were held by neighboring clergy.

Two of the lay readers who served Christ Church and had notable careers thereafter as clergy, were the Rev. Loyal Y. Graham, 3d in 1917, rector for many years of Christ Church, Stratford, and the Rt.

Rev. F. Percy Goddard, who became Suffragan Bishop in Texas in 1956.

Then, in 1928, both churches united in calling the Rev. James B. Sill who served as rector 1928-1929. He lived in Quaker Farms at the home of Mr. Charles Hawkins on Quaker Farms Road. He was the first rector to possess an automobile.

After Mr. Sill left, the parishes were vacant in 1930, and in 1931 Bishop Acheson persuaded the Rev. Harold Edwards, rector of Trinity Church, Seymour, to act as priest in charge of both churches, with Mr. Henry S. Douglas, as lay reader. The latter was ordained priest in 1933, and became "priest in charge" of both parishes, continuing as such until his resignation in 1948. He lived at first in the rectory on Academy Road, but as it had gotten into disrepair, Mr. Douglas persuaded St. Peter's Church in 1935 to sell it and purchase the house on the west side of Oxford Road, just south of the church. Mr. Douglas' rectorate was one of devoted service to both churches and the community.

The recently retired rector, the Rev. Wm E. Soule was priest in charge of both churches, his first service being held September 5th, 1948. He is an accomplished musician, and is chairman of the Episcopal Commission on Church Music in the Diocese of Connecticut. He is also a member of the Committee on Architecture. One of his other interests is that of education, having been, prior to his coming to Oxford, a teacher in several well-known private schools for boys.

He resigned from the Oxford Churches, Sept. 1, 1959.

On January 1, 1960, the Rev. Hugh L. S. Thompson, was appointed Vicar of both churches.

THE METHODIST CHURCH

The Methodist Church in Oxford is located on Freeman Road, Riverside, a short distance north of that road junction with Copper Mine Road, it and its adjoining cemetery having been moved to this location when the Stevenson Dam was built in 1918-1920.

Early in the nineteenth century, probably around 1810 "it occurred to the inhabitants of Punkups, (the name given to the valley on the easterly side of the Housatonic River from Five Mile Brook to some distance above Zoar Bridge) that some kind of a meeting place was desirable, and they therefore built a church, on the "bee" plan. Some gave land, others timber, others labor, and a few money. For years the only regular religious services were held by Methodist ministers, who "riding the circuit," came around once a month or so. Between times, it is said that "anybody occupied the church, Mormon apostles, Quakers, Second Adventists, and in one case, a man who talked in an unknown tongue".

"The only regularly organized religious society in the neighborhood



Old Riverside Church, Methodist.

came to be that known as the "Pleasant Vale Methodist Society". For many years, pastors have been appointed by the New York East Conference for this church in connection with the churches at Great Hill and East Village."

The Methodist Society services, in the course of time became more frequent, increasing from monthly to fortnightly and then to weekly, and this society practically came to be in charge of the property. A vote was taken to give title to the M. E. presiding elder for the district, but the vote was declared invalid, and the building continued as a community affair. When a company was chartered to build a dam on the Housatonic at Stevenson, below the church, the question of legal ownership of the church became a practical one, and in the dilemma, the General Assembly chartered the "Stevenson Union Church Association", and gave the building to the corporation, in trust, for the benefit of the people in the neighborhood.

It has been known at various periods as "The Pleasant Vale M. E. Church", and "The Stevenson M. E. Church", and is now known as "The Riverside M. E. Church."

Some of the Methodist ministers who served the church at various times were as follows,-

In 1894 the Rev. John Zeiter

In 1919 the Rev. A. J. Smith, D. D. had charge for two years, and a new church was built, at which he made the dedicating address.

Until 1946, the Rev. Cyrus Severance of Derby Methodist Church

Until Jan., 1949 the Rev. Matthew Gates

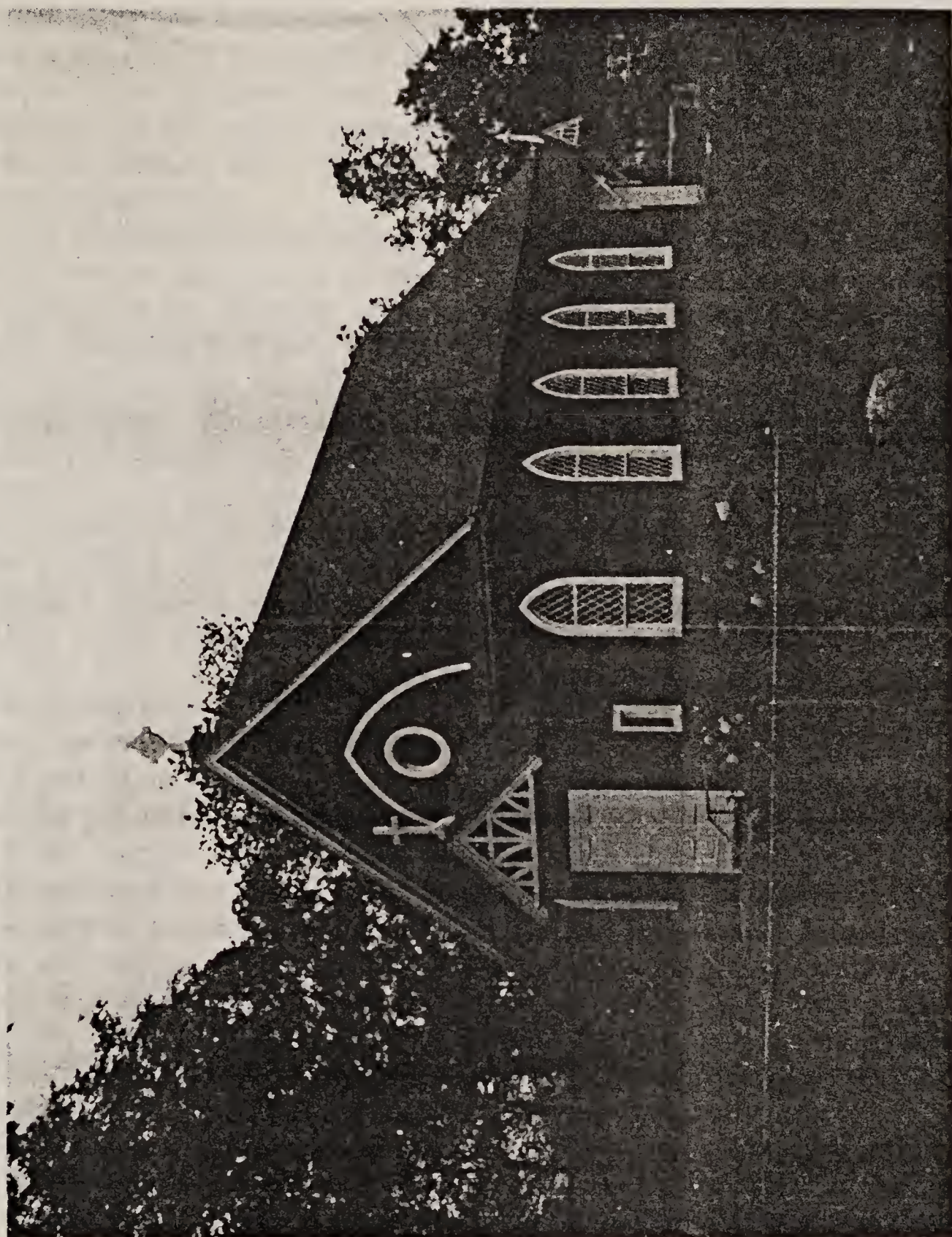
Until May 1949 the Rev. Edwin Towle

Then followed the Rev. Russell Bales, the Rev. Oscar Hartzler, the Rev. Wm Rhodes, the Rev. Wm. Hughes, and the present pastor the Rev. James Trew, who serves also in Newtown.

The Roman Catholic Church of St. Thomas the Apostle

Because of the tradition of almost two hundred years of Puritanism in Connecticut, it is probably true that a Connecticut Yankee never saw a Catholic. The arrival of French troops, helping in our Revolution, gave Connecticut settlers almost their first-hand view of living Catholics. This event occurred in the Town of Lebanon, where Rochambeau's infantry and huzzars were encamped for six months. In Hartford, it is reported that the first Mass in Connecticut was said for these soldiers in June, 1781.

After the Revolution, Rev. John Carroll was made the first Bishop of Baltimore in 1789, but there was still but a scattering of Catholic inhabitants here in Connecticut, without a church or priest residing within the limits of the State. But religious liberty became a reality in 1818 with the new State Constitution, which said "no preference shall be given by law to any Christian sect or mode of worship."



St. Thomas Church R. C. C. Oxford Rd.

There were some individual Catholics present in New England during the entire colonial period. Their presence was never restricted but until after the Revolution, it was not possible for Catholics to organize a church or to practice their religion openly. In addition, Catholics were excluded from the privilege of freeman and office holding because of the oath of supremacy and allegiance which was required. As late as 1835, there were only 730 Catholics in the whole State of Connecticut.

In the neighborhood of Oxford, the first Catholic church to be erected was St. Mary's, in Derby, in 1845. The land for the church was donated to the Catholic population by Anson Phelps, a Protestant. Catholic services had been held in Humphreysville (later called Seymour) in 1844 in the "old log House" on the left side of what is now Raymond Street. Six members of that faith were then living there; Nicholas and Daniel Brockway, Nicholas Cass, Patrick and Thomas Gaffney, and James Quinlan. But it was not until 1856 that the first Catholic church of St. Augustine was built in Seymour.

The Catholic church in Oxford has existed only since about 1912. The early Catholics of this district were able to hear Mass, prior to this time in the home of Miss Harriet Frazer on the Oxford-Southbury Road, (the house now occupied by the Joseph Posick family), said by visiting priests.

Then, in 1906, the Rev. George T. Sinnott, at that time pastor of St. Rose's church in Newtown, was given the Oxford Mission assignment, and acting for the new mission, purchased a piece of land on the Oxford Road from Auguste and Virginie Pelletier and the corner stone of the new church was laid in 1911 and called St. Thomas the Apostle.

The church was first known as the "Coman Memorial" after a Mr. Coman who left money in his will to be used for building a Catholic Church, it is said, "in some place where there is none". One of his daughters, Mrs. Courtney, lived in Quaker Farms, (on the west side at "Seven Mile Brook"). Various statues in the church bear plaques commemorating the names of members of the Coman family.

The mission continued to be served by Father Sinnott until 1924. Then, when the Rev. J. J. McAuliffe became the first resident pastor of St. Michael's Church, Beacon Falls, he also assumed the church in Oxford as a mission. He was succeeded by Rev. Henry Coleman and later by Rev. Cyrus Higgins, and by Rev. Jerome Cook. In 1948, the Oxford Church had been assigned to St. Augustine's Church in Seymour, the pastor of which was and still is The Rev. Albert A. Callahan. It is estimated that now, in 1960 there are about 300 families who are parishoners of the Oxford mission of St. Thomas the Apostle.

CHAPTER 32

SCHOOLS AND P.T.A.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By the time the section now called Oxford began to be settled, the citizens of Derby had begun to wrestle with the problem of providing a proper education for their children, and strangely enough the first record of their efforts in that direction was a court order requiring every county town to establish a Latin School, and thus give their older children what we would call "higher education". The order reads; "1676 Whare as in the law in scools it is ordered yt in every Counti town shall keep a lattin school-----that if any county Town shall Neglect to keepe a Lattin Scole, according to order There shall Bee paid a fine of ten pounds by ye said county town to ye next Town in there county yt will ingage and keep a Lattin scole in it."

In other words, each County Town was required to provide its own Latin School, and not lean on its neighbors, for the scholars' extended training.

For the first recorded day school for Derby, Abel Gunn notes the following vote passed Sep 29, 1701; "Voted it be left with ye Townsmen off Derby to procure a school Mr for ye Town off Derby; and they agreed with Jno James".

The "Townsmen" were, in to-day's language, the Selectmen of the town. Apparently, Mr. James was the first recorded Derby school teacher. It is doubtful, however, whether he could have had much contact with the boys and girls in the Oxford district, and as the Oxford church was not founded until 1741, there was no minister there to help out, and so, probably all the education the children could get in those first days was what their fathers could give them. But in October 1748, the Parish Meeting voted to hire a schoolmaster for three months, "one month at the Sabbath Day House, one month on Quakers Farm Rd., and another in the eastern part of the parish."

The next record of school matters in any part of Oxford which has been found is in 1779, when a number of inhabitants of the 4th and 5th Derby school districts presented, at a Town Meeting held Dec. 13th, a petition for the formation of a new school district in the Western part of what is now Beacon Falls, but which was then part of the parish of Oxford. It was signed by the following as committee:

Joseph Davis, Abraham Basit, Saml Smith Jr., David Person, John

Davis, John Church, Isaac Beecher, Ebenezer Riigs, John Riggs, and Bradford Steel.

(The school district so formed lay in the Chestnut Hill-Towantic Section.)

After this action in 1779, the only record of school matters is entry Apr. 21, 1837 in the diary of Alfred Harger, "Engaged Louisa Curtiss to teach school".

Then there is a gap, without identifiable records of schools or educational activities, until 1868, when the Oxford map of that date shows the town divided into thirteen school districts.

But the Oxford public schools in the first half of the nineteenth century were, according to older residents, much the same as those throughout the rest of New England, which one writer described as follows:

"The school had but one room, which at first was heated by an open fire place, but which by about 1820, had a cast iron stove. It was the duty of one of the older boys to see to it that a good supply of firewood was on hand throughout the winter, and each school morning he had to be on hand early to build the fire so as to have the room fairly warm before school opened.

"A continuous desk ran around three sides of the room, leaving an aisle next the wall. It had one long continuous bench, over which the scholars had to step, in order to be seated. In the open space in front was the teacher's table."

Perhaps the only improvement in the latter half of the nineteenth century in the Oxford Schools was that some buildings had two rooms, with a black board and individual desks. It was not until 1918 that the bare bulb electric light appeared in Oxford.

"There were two school terms, winter and summer. For the winter, the teacher in the earlier schools was a man, usually young, who had studied at an "Academy" for a year or two, and who was glad to gain ready money by teaching in the winter when work was slack on his father's farm. His pay was small, but he was at no expense for living, as he "boarded around," that is, he lived with each family of the neighborhood for a number of weeks proportioned to the number of scholars in the school."

That is, if there were 12 scholars and the term consisted of twelve weeks, he would stay at the home of each scholar one week. Presumably, the larger families had to carry the heaviest share of this entertainment. "The winter term began the week after the Thanksgiving Day and continued twelve to sixteen weeks"; say from Nov. 29th to Feb. 19th, or at latest March 19th. "School kept every day in the week except Sunday."

THE SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN 1868

The 1868 map of Oxford shows the town divided into thirteen districts, as follows:

	<u>School Location</u>
District No. 1. Oxford Center	Academy St.
Joint Dist. No. 1. Rock House Hill	Holbrook Rd., Seymour
No. 2 Quakers Farms	East side of Quaker Farms Rd. just north of Hogs Back Rd.
No. 3 Chestnut Hill	Chestnut Tree Hill Rd. (east side) just north of Atwater Treat's.
No. 4 Christian St.	N. W. Corner of Christian St. and Hawley Rd.
No. 5 Five Mile Hill	East side of Park Rd. at junction of Moose Hill Rd.
No. 6 Pines Bridge	N. W. Corner of Rimmon Rd. & Old Pike
District No. 7 Bowers Hill	S. E. Corner of Bowers Hill Rd. & Good Hill Rd.
Joint Dist. No. 7 Toby's Rock	Not shown
No. 8 Hulls Hill	North side of Georges Hill Rd. west of Kettletown Road
No. 9 Red City	East side of Route 67, 1 1/4 mile south of Christian St.
No. 10 Shrub Oak	West side of Route 67 just south of Great Hill Road
No. 11 Red Oak	North side of Chestnut Tree Hill Rd. at Griswold Rd.
No. 12 Zoar Bridge	At junction of Copper Mine Rd. and the then River Road
District No. 13 Riggs St.	On east side of Riggs St. just south of Jack's Hill Rd.
Southford Joint District	not shown.

"The summer term began the first Monday in May, and the teacher was a woman." (It is doubtful if this was true in the earlier days and it is uncertain just when women began to teach).

"This term, school closed every other Saturday. The woman teacher's pay was from a dollar to a dollar and seventy-five cents a week. "Last day", or "Commencement" as we call it, came on Thursday in the middle of August."

"From 1840 to 1850, school still consisted of two terms, one in summer and one in winter, but the custom of "boarding around" was gradually falling into disuse". Instead, the teacher boarded with one family throughout the term, for which he or she paid out of their meagre salaries.

"By this time, black boards were in use, and by 1870, or so, three terms became usual, a long winter of twelve weeks and a spring and a fall term of ten weeks each. And it had become so much the rule that the teacher should be a woman that a man teacher in a primary school was looked upon as a good deal of a curiosity.

"By this time the women teachers were paid five or six dollars a week, and usually came from neighboring families. In case she came from some other town, she boarded in the vicinity of the schoolhouse at a weekly cost of two to three dollars." Most scholars left school for good at fourteen or fifteen, but a few would study at an academy in a neighboring town.

In Oxford, from the beginning up to as late as 1899, each School District raised its own money for teacher's salaries, and, presumably, hired its own teachers, and in general, managed its own financial affairs.

SCHOOLS 1870 TO 1915

In 1795, Connecticut sold what was left of the strip of land known in the Midwest sometimes as New Connecticut (and sometimes as the Western Reserve) for \$1,200,000, and the General Assembly ordered that the money should be a permanent and irreducible fund, the interest from which should be used for schooling. As we have previously stated, Derby, including Oxford, was laid out into school districts. Derby's share of the interest from the Government School Fund was divided amongst the school districts and each district managed its own school affairs including the paying of wages to the school teachers. Because of the existence of this fund, the tendency grew for the districts not to raise any additional money for school funds. The first Selectmen's Report which Mr. Treat preserved is that for the year 1875, and it reports "Received from State for Schools, \$605.80", but the only items of expense for educational purposes, paid by the town, were for the Board of Education visiting schools \$158.87 and for the town's share of the Joint School District at Rock House Hill.

The report for 1877 is missing, but in 1878, the expenditures for schools by districts are listed as follows:

1st District	(Center)	\$240.00
2nd	" (Quaker Farms)	240.00
3d	" (Chestnut Hill)	135.00
4th	" (Christian St.)	134.00
5th	" (Five Mile Hill)	135.00
6th	" (Rimmon Hill)	135.00
7th Joint District	(Tobys Hill)	135.00
8th	" " (Hulls Hill)	135.11
9th District	(Red City)	135.00
10th Joint District	(Shrub Oak)	130.00
11th	" " (Red Oak)	134.80
12th District	(Zoar Bridge)	135.00
		<hr/> \$1823.91

Expenditures for schools continued to run about the same until 1890 when they increased to \$2127.86 for 13 school districts. In 1896 there came a marked change in the interest shown in the public school system in Oxford, probably because in that year the Rev. Lewis F. Morris became chairman of the school visitors. He had become rector of the two Episcopal churches in Oxford in 1888 and was evidently a man of strong character.

The report states that during the year there were schools open in but nine of the twelve school districts, the number of scholars registered running from a maximum of 28 in the Hull's Hill School to a minimum of 16 at Zoar Bridge. The average attendance was greatest at Hull's Hill, 15, and the least 8.6 at Zoar Bridge. "In order of punctuality compared with actual attendance the standing was as follows:

1st Quaker Farms	5th Center
2d Bowers Hill	6th Zoar Bridge
3d Red Oak	7th Chestnut Tree Hill
4th Shrub Oak	8th Riggs St.
9th Hull's Hill	

Mr. Morris continues, "I have given this much space for statistictal information as to attendance and punctuality because they are of first importance. I should call attention to the old and established fact that none of the school rooms are supplied with books and apparatus which the best teachers need for successful teaching: also to the fact that most of your school buildings will soon be uninhabitable. But it will not be wise to spend much money on them, for the time is not far distant when it will be found necessary to lessen the number of districts and to place school houses on other sites than those they now occupy.

"I wish to call your attention to evils, one of which has crept into the schools all over the land and is called an improvement. I refer to the exclusive use of writing pads. This of course improves the

demand for paper and makes the paper business better than it would otherwise be. And this is all the improvement there is about it. The chief objection to the exclusive use of pads is that it imposes an unnecessary tax upon the patrons of schools. The slate which costs but little more than one large pad can be used year after year for most writing purposes, and the pupil requires several pads in one term. As to the noise charged against the use of the slate, that can easily be avoided. I find that there is as much noise now where pads alone are used as there was in schools where they were never heard of. Again, it is well known by all penman that the use of the pencil, which is required in writing on pads, tends to produce carelessness in penmanship. This evil should be abated by teachers requiring the use of the slate at all times when its use will benefit the pupils as much as will the use of the pad.

"In looking over the school registers, I notice that some teachers taught on Saturdays and holidays, and even on Good Friday. This is an evil which it seems to me should be and can easily be avoided. The teachers are employed to teach, not at times most convenient for themselves, but at times when it shall be most convenient for children to go to school. And it often happens that parents and guardians appoint Saturdays and holidays, when they have reason to suppose there will be no school, for some work or duty to be done by their children at home. The teacher, then who takes these days to make up for school days when there was no school is likely to be robbing some one of time.

"Some teachers have not been particular about the length of daily school sessions; whether or not they should keep school from 9 o'clock till 12 and from 1 to 4. I call this to your attention because if the public cares not in what manner and when and how long or short time the schools are kept, it is apparent that the tax payers' money will be paid for no good purpose. As to the efficiency of school room work during the year, there has been no visible improvement, nor will there be in years to come until teachers shall be employed who thoroughly know and love the art of teaching."

In his 1897 report as Chairman of the Board of Education, Mr. Morris says, "During the past year, schools have been maintained in ten districts at the expense of \$2517.42 which amount includes teachers' salaries, cost of incidental repairs on buildings and of superintendence. Of this amount, \$481.50 was paid by the State School Fund.

The cost of schooling a pupil varied from \$15.18 at the Riggs St. School to \$28.58 at the Chestnut Tree Hill School. Only five of the schools had an average attendance of 50 percent of the number registered. The number of children enumerated between the ages of 4 and 16 was 214."

Mr. Morris closes his report with the following caustic comment; "All these difficulties would be avoided if the old district system were

abolished and the entire management of the schools put where it belongs; in the hands of a board of education."

It took two more years for Mr. Morris' words to be acted upon, the change to Town management being made in 1899, but Mr. Morris did not stay to see it in effect, as he resigned as rector of the Episcopal Churches in 1897.

In 1898, the Town Report stated that "a long needed school house has been erected in the first district (Oxford Center) capable of accomodating some pupils from outlying districts, if required" This building continued in use until the erection of the Centralized School, when it was taken over by the Free Public Library and The Center Fire Company.

In 1899, they reported that "an important change has taken place from the old (district) system to town management. We have been led to hope that it will lessen the expenses. Let us hope it will increase the efficiency of our schools."

In the same year, the amounts paid to teachers in wages is given, varying from \$198.00 a year in the Great Hill District to \$216.00 a year in most other districts.

One other interesting item of expense listed in that year, namely; "To Board of Education, Ansonia, 26 desks \$8.20" One wonders whether these were the first individual desks used in the Oxford Schools.

In 1900, they report that "The transition from the district system to town management has taken place. Sometime shortly before 1900 schoolbuilding No. 2 on Quaker Farms Road just north of Hogs Back Road was moved to the east side of Quaker Farms Road a short distance south of Barry Road, where it is now used for storing Town Road Equipment."

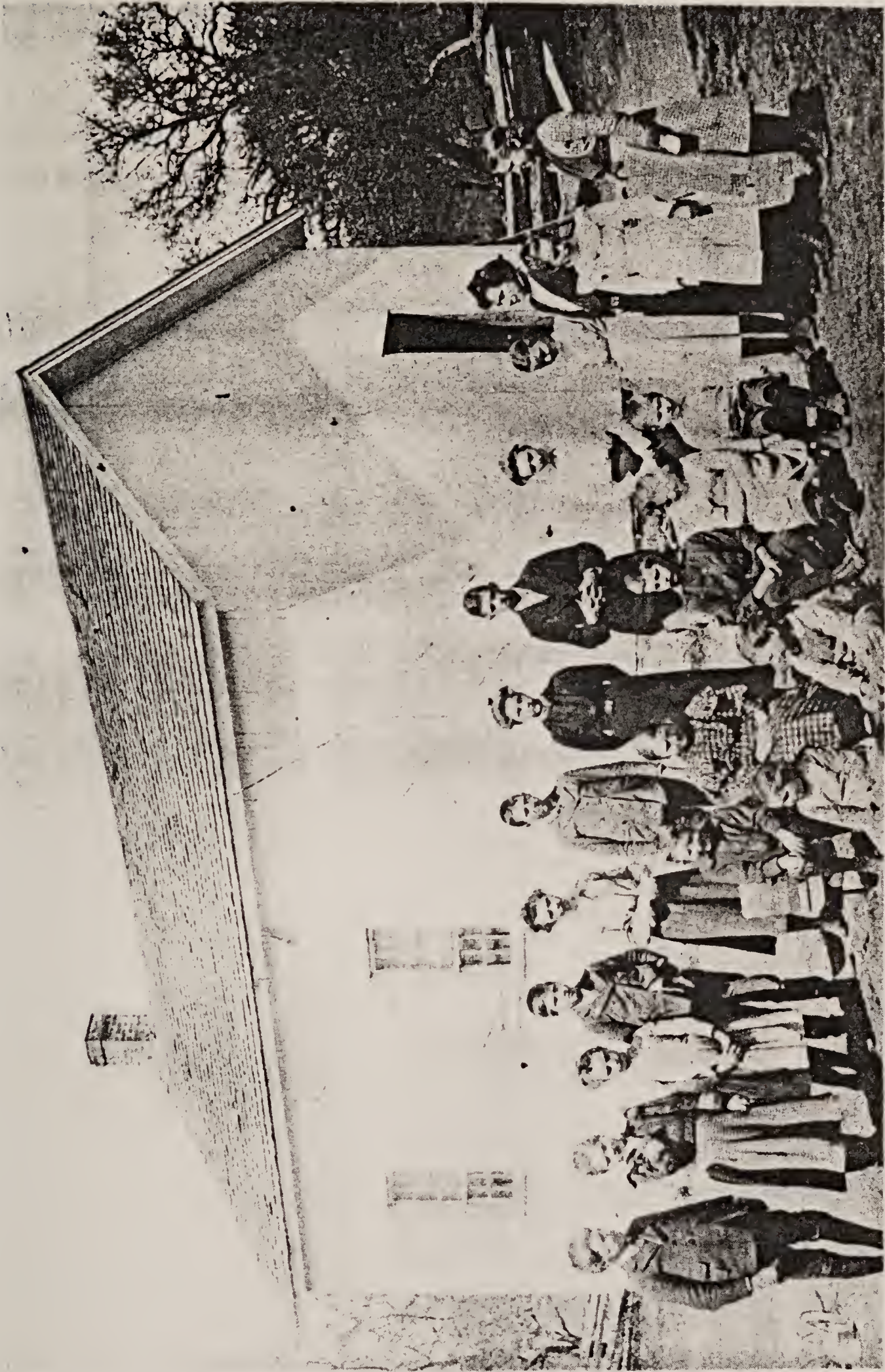
Things seem to have gone on about as they were until 1904, when the President of the School Committee stated that "The additional money received from the State has enabled us to make a substantial increase in the wages of teachers. It should be an object for every tax payer to improve the attendance in our schools."

In 1908 they reported for the first time the names of the teachers, as follows:-

Quaker Farms
Bell School
Center School
Red Oak

Christian St.
Bowers Hill

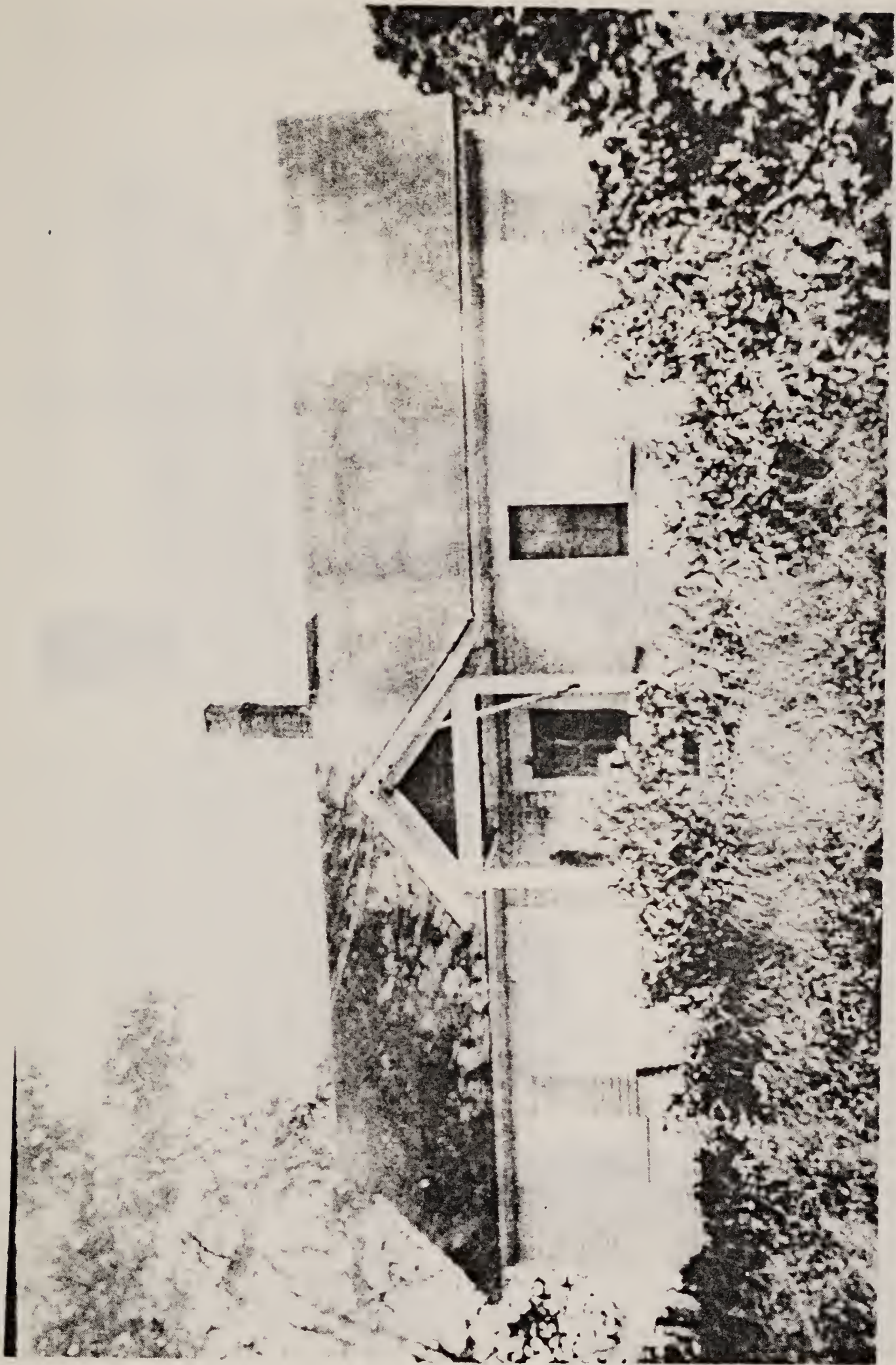
Miss R. I. Platt
Miss Geneva Sullivan
Miss Lorena V. Tucker
Miss Mildred Cromwell
Miss M. E. Lancaster
Miss R. A. Holbrook
Miss Ophelia Dahinden
Miss Lillian Cable
Miss Abbie Pope



Old Quaker Farms School



Old Quaker Farms School, Interior.



“New” Quaker Farms School

Shrub Oak School.





“New” Center School.

Shrub Oak	Miss Nona O'Brien
Riggs St.	Miss Carrie Johnson
Riverside	Miss Ethel Brown
	Miss Sadie Hatch
	Mrs. John Sherwood

The maximum Salary in 1908 was \$324.00.

In 1911 came the first report of the State Superintendent of Schools, who stated that the town had nine schools in use, the grades in each school having been as follows:-

Center	Grades 1, 2, 4, 7
Quaker Farms	" 1, 3, 4, 6, 7
Bowers Hill	" 1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Riverside	" 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
Christian St.	" 1, 2, 3, 4, 6
Riggs St.	" 1, 2, 4, 7
Red Oak	" 1, 4, 5, 6
Shrub Oak	" 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Bell	" 1, 3, 4, 6

This apparently was the first attempt to separate the scholars into grades, the Superintendant saying, "The matter of grading was taken up with the teachers at the beginning of the year. The children were grouped after considering age, ability and attainment." He continues saying that "the teaching force has been on the whole a very good one. Six of the nine teachers graduated or attended normal schools."

In the summer of 1911, a new schoolhouse was built at Quaker Farms (at S. W. corner of Quaker Farms Rd. and Barry Road) at a cost of \$75.00 for land plus \$2,000.00 for the building.

In 1916, the Superintendent records the interesting fact that "We have had a successful state model school at Shrub Oak during the year," but comments that "it is unfortunate that we are unable to retain so small a number of our teachers, and must constantly recruit our force from the number of those who are beginners." He then adds that "We should have at least one apprentice at work here (in the model school) training to become a teacher in the town. She should be a local high school girl."

He has the following remarks to make about the students in high school, "We have had thirty children attending the various high schools at a tuition cost of \$1457.44 and conveyance of \$1365.65, at total of \$2,823.09. This is an amount sufficient to operate a good high school in town, if such were needed." The total represented a cost of \$94.00 per child compared with the local grade schools \$25.00 per child. He ventured the opinion that the cost per high school child should be not greater than \$65.00.

In 1917, it is reported that "the Shrub Oak school is taxed to its utmost seating capacity, and that serious consideration should be given

to building a new school there.” This finally came about in 1920:-“the new two room building will be ready in November”. In 1917 also, the Riverside School was maintained for three children from Oxford and three from Monroe, but with the building of the Stevenson Dam the local population of Riverside increased so that in 1919, it became necessary to build an addition, making it a two room school. This condition was only temporary for with the completion of the dam, the year 1920 found it only necessary to have one teacher.

In 1920, the maximum salary paid to any one teacher in the Oxford schools was approximately \$600.00, whereas the School Superintendent reported that the average salary paid to elementary school teachers in 100 Connecticut towns the previous year was \$761.00.

By 1921, the question of consolidation of the schools came to the front in the Superintendent’s report for that year, when he asked this question, “Should Oxford consolidate its schools” ? and added the comment “It is urged that your committee consider consolidation as a future program.” But it took 27 more years of discussion before his idea came to fruition in the “Centralized School” in 1948.

In 1913-1914, the town set up a separate account, “Town of Oxford, in account with School Treasurer” and listed “Total amount of orders paid for schools, \$6,015.90. In 1915, the Town School Committee reported total for schools, \$7,420.78. In 1916 the report list \$8,049.62, 1917 \$7,222.02. The school supervisor states, “The state furnishes supervision to the town without cost; citizens and parents should make every effort to co-operate. Beginning with next July (1918) the state will reimburse the town 45 per cent of the teachers’ salaries.

In 1918 the cost was \$7,958.57 and the teachers as follows:-

Ophelia Dahinden	Center	State certificate
Mrs. Mary E. Prescott	Chestnut Hill Town	"
Justine E. Doolittle	Christian St. State	"
Lillian Smith	Red Oak	State "
Elizabeth M. Blodgett	Riggs St.	State "
Margaret Burke	Shrub Oak	State "
Margaret E. Owens	Shrub Oak	Town "
Carrie A. Pratt	Quaker Farms	" "
Marguerite Maher	Riverside	State "
Julia Bronson	Bell	" "

In 1919, \$9,862.38, and the Supervisor reports salaries mostly \$600.00 per year and adds “The cost of living has increased more than 50 per cent in the past year and no teacher can maintain herself for much less than \$1000.00, and hence higher salaries must be paid. The State has helped this by raising the teachers grant from 45 per cent to 60 per cent of the teachers salaries. 1920, \$10,501.96; 1921, \$13,279.18 Consolidation of the schools is again recommended; 1922, \$15,504.21. Hiring of school nurse recommended; 1923, \$15,405.48,

cost per pupil \$66.12; 1924, \$18,020.88, double session was necessary at Center School, School nurse one day each month; 1925, \$22,710.43, cost per pupil \$90.11. The public library benefited greatly the schools; 1926, \$22,027.02, School nurse 3 days each month, The local library has been a splendid help to the schools and the town should support it generously; 1927, \$26,013.18, A music supervisor was employed for the first time; 1928, \$25,066.62, school nurse 3 days."

By 1930 the total cost of schools had risen to \$29,986.16 and the average salary around \$1000.00.

November 1st, 1947, School bonds were issued for \$190,000 for construction of the new centralized school, and bids had been received on construction, and on November 1948 the new school was occupied by the children. It was formally dedicated December 18, 1948. Richard Wilkinson was appointed the first Principal of the school. He was succeeded by Edmund Schade, the present Principal.

The Centralized School Committee heading up this important undertaking was:

Eldridge E. Seeley, Chairman
 Hubert E. Stoddard, Vice Chairman
 Mrs. Francis B. Seccombe, Secretary
 Merwin E. Terrell
 R. Harold Treat
 Charles B. Pope
 Frederick R. Bice, Jr.
 Franklyn R. Sanford

For the year ending June 30, 1947, the total costs of schools was \$42,654.95.

By 1950, the average salary of teachers was \$3,071 and the total school expenditures \$80,009.69.

In 1960, the teachers' salaries varied from a minimum of \$4000. per year to a maximum of \$6000, and the total expenses of the Board of Education for the year ending June 30th, 1959 were \$247,576.44. In 1899, the management of the Town Schools was taken away from the old School Districts and put under a "Town School Committee". Commencing in 1932 the Town Records (Minutes of Town Meetings and Town Annual Reports) begin to make reference to "The School Board", and in 1932 to "The Board of Education", but up to 1938, the name "Town School Committee" still persists. Nevertheless, the first "Board of Education" seems to have been that given in the School Supervisors Report (in the Town Report) for 1931-1932, namely:

Mr. Thomas Schreiber, Chairman,	1934
Mrs. Mary E. Nichols, Sec.	1932
Mr. Richard E. Nyberg, Treas.	1933
Mr. Charles P. Pope	1934
Mr. Albert T. Pope	1933
Mrs. Charlotte L. Cassidy	1932

The Board continued to consist of six members until 1957 when the number was increased to nine. The present members are,-

Mr. Walter R. Dann
 Mr. Carl A. Lundgren
 Mr. John E. Newell
 Mr. Frederick J. Pommer
 Mrs. Anna Posick
 Mrs. Lillian Weitzler
 Mr. W. Wilson White
 Mr. Lawrence W. Widdecombe, Jr.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN OXFORD

The School on Academy Road

On the north side of Academy Road, just east of Jack's Brook, there was a school building for many years, from which the road derives its name. It is thought that this was the school in which Judge Nathan J. Wilcoxson taught as a young man, from 1826 to 1828. It is presumed also that "Mr. Ferguson's school rooms" referred to in 1833 in the records of St. Peter's Church were also at the same location.

The school was referred to in 1903 by Mrs. Elisha Wheeler, then in her 87th year, who said "that when she went to it the children always got their water from a tub standing to the left of the basement door (of the house next door, later the rectory) and that this was supplied by pipe from a spring on the hill across the brook."

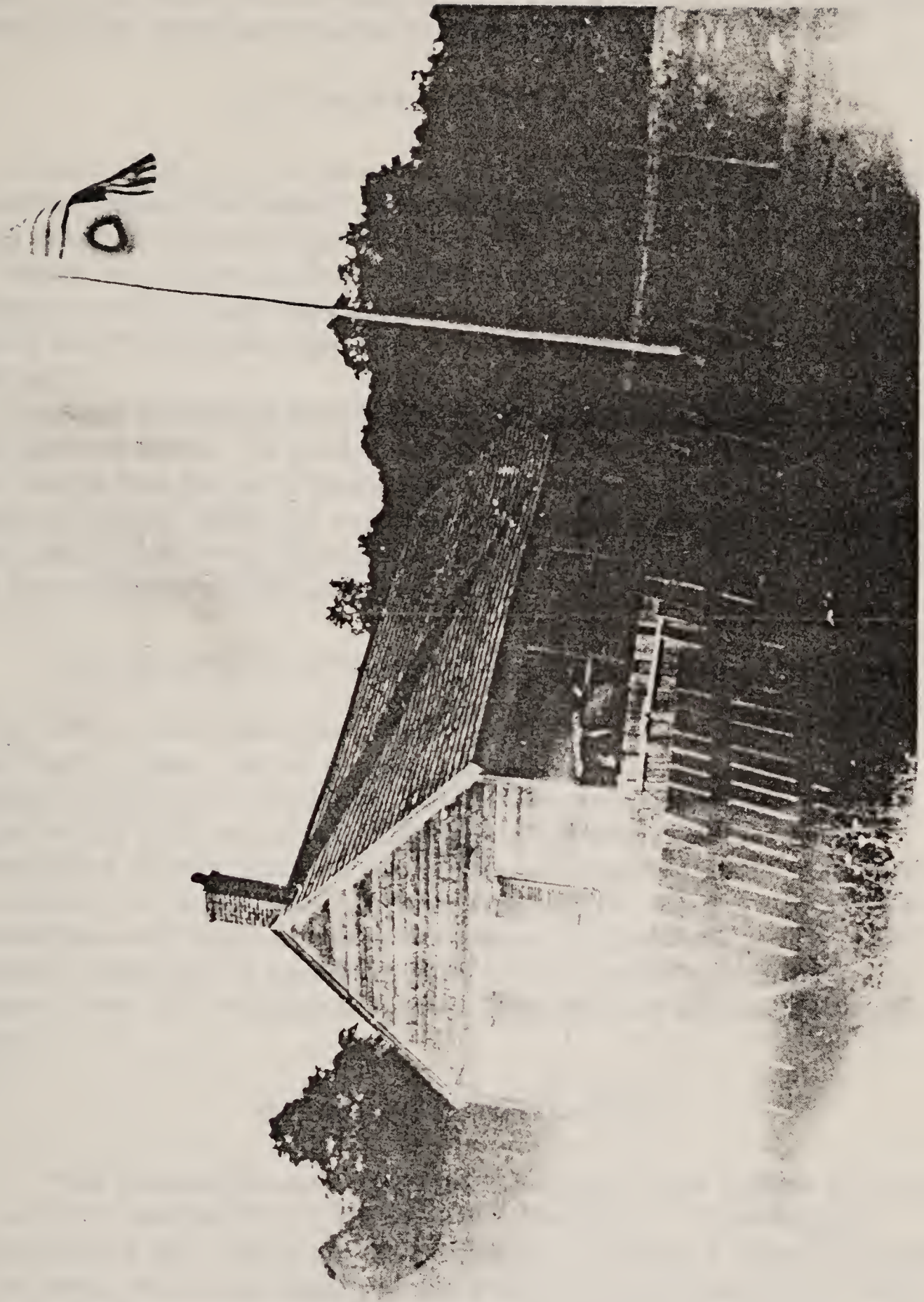
As Mrs. Wheeler was born in 1816, she may have attended this "select school" while Judge Wilcoxson was teaching there, at which time she was from 10 years old to 12, and also she may have continued attending there through 1833 under Mr. Ferguson.

It is said that "a select school has been taught since that time but no regular academy has been maintained". Again there is no record of where the "select school" was held, but it seems a fair inference that it was in the building on Academy Road.

The building later became District School No. 1, as it is shown as such on the 1868 map of Oxford, but in what year this occurred is unknown.

McEwen's School for Boys, on Hog's Back Road

For fourteen years, between 1846 and 1860, David J. McEwen, conducted a boarding school for boys in his house on Hog's Back Road at the summit of the high hill between Oxford Center and Quaker Farms



Old "Academy", on Academy Rd. Later "Old" Center School.

(now the residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Wesley) "and many are those who in after years remembered with gratitude the kindly instruction and New England training received there."

The Pleasant Vale School for Boys

Around 1868, R. S. Hinman was the proprietor of the "Pleasant Vale Boarding School for boys," in the Punkups section of Oxford about one mile south of Zoar Bridge, or in what is now known as Riverside.

While not located in Oxford, there was a school opened in 1849, in Humphreysville (now Seymour) known as the Humphreysville Academy which was "deservedly popular under the direction of George B. Glendening."

He was an efficient instructor and drew many pupils from the neighboring towns. In 1853, he was succeeded by Frederick Durand, who taught two years in Union Hall. Mr. Gay, a graduate of Yale, came in August 1855, but continued only a few months. So it may have been likely that some Oxford young people attended this Academy in the years between 1849 and 1855.

St. Margaret's School for Girls in Waterbury, Conn.

In 1865 an Episcopal Diocesan School for Girls was founded in Waterbury, Conn. In the chapter on "Physicians and Health" it is pointed out that Dr. Lounsbury, of Oxford, in the summer of 1874 urged at the Diocesan Convention that the Episcopal Church in Connecticut should institute parochial schools, one such to be located in Oxford. No action was taken on this, and St. Margaret's has remained the only Episcopal Church School in Connecticut. Originally located in the city, it moved in 1928 to the outskirts of Waterbury, where it now is. Occasionally, girls from Oxford have attended this school.

Mr. Munn's School for Boys

"The Nichols House, located on the Main Road (Route 67) near Red City was built in 1782 by a Mr. Beardsley. His daughter married a Mr. Munn, and they used the house as a boarding school for boys, who were taught in the small structure nearby by Mr. Munn. Only recently (prior to 1935) have door and window casings been removed which bore the autographs of boys who attended the school."

Buck Hill Seminary, Southford

Buck Hill Seminary in Southford was a boarding school for boys which was very successfully carried on by Deacon R. R. Curtis for

about 15 years, from 1845 to 1860. "Housed in a very pleasant location on the east slope of the hill, a mile north of the village, had accommodations for thirty boys. It was usually filled and had a good reputation. Since that time, other select schools have been taught in the town by Miss E. L. Townsend and others".

THE OXFORD PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

On Nov. 24, 1931, a group of about twenty-five persons interested in the Oxford Public Schools met at the Oxford Grange Hall and organized the Oxford Parent Teacher Association, covering all of the eight district schools. The objects of the Association were the same as those of other Parent-Teacher Associations throughout Connecticut, namely:

1. To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church, and community.
2. To raise the standards of home life.
3. To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth.
4. To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teachers may cooperate intelligently in the training of the child.
5. To develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

Policies: Shall be, 1. educational, 2. noncommercial, 3. non-sectarian, 4. shall not seek to direct the administrative activities of the schools or to control their policies.

The first officers (who were elected at this meeting) were:

Mrs. Viola Madorno, President; Mrs. Rose Currish, Vice President; Mrs. Mary Nichols, Secretary; Mrs. Dorothy Ives, Treasurer.

The association became a Rural P.T.A. unit in 1931 and a Congress Unit April 27th, 1955.

By-laws were adopted June 23, 1932 and the Association began to take an active part in School affairs. In 1932, it sponsored "The Hot Soup Program" in all eight schools, a "Dental Clinic" and the "Summer Round Up". The latter included listing all the children about to enter the first grade and giving them a physical check up (eyes, etc.) under State Supervision, at the Grange Hall.

In 1933, Mrs. Madorno resigned as President and was succeeded by Mrs. Susan Kelley, who continued as president until the commencement of the school year, 1935-36. On May 28th and 29th, 1933, the Association sponsored the Tableau given in the Town Celebration of

the 250th Anniversary of the Coming of the White Settlers to Oxford and the George Washington Bi-Centennial. In January 1934, students of the Oxford Schools, in conjunction with the Middlebury schools had X-ray examinations for tuberculosis. On Nov. 7th of the same year, the Association sponsored a concert at Grange Hall under the direction of Mr. Fred May, Music Supervisor. Pieces were rendered by "young men from the Yale School of Music and the New Haven Symphony, and also from Naugatuck." Tenor and Soprano solos were also rendered. The concert was reported in the local press as being considered by many the finest entertainment of the higher type presented in the town in several years.

The Rev. Henry S. Douglas (Rector of the two Episcopal churches in Oxford) was president of the Association, 1935-36 and 1936-37, and during his first year, a trip of 8th Grade children to Hartford was sponsored. In the latter year a Card Party was given for the benefit of Flood Victims, and the first annual Hallowe'en Party for children was held at the Grange, with the idea of keeping the children off the streets that night.

The program for meetings during 1936-37 is of interest, because of the variety of subjects treated at the meetings, the main theme being "Seven Cardinal Objects of Education".

- 1st "Health and Safety"
- 2nd "Worthy Home Life"
- 3rd "Learning as a Part of Life"
- 4th "Citizenship and World Goodwill"
- 5th "Vocational and Economic Effectiveness"
- 6th "Wise Use of Leisure Time"
- 7th "Character Building"

The Speakers were Miss Noreen McGurn, Oxford School Nurse; Miss May Smyth, of Seymour Schools, Physical Education; Rev. Elsie Stowe, Pastor, Great Hill Church; Dr. Henry L. Adams, Principal of the Seymour High School; Senator Henry M. Bradley; Mr. John J. F. Ruddy, Principal of Pine Manual Training School, Ansonia; The Rev. George A. Barrow, PhD, Headmaster of Woodbridge Country Day School; Mr. Harry S. Hansen, Boy-Scout Executive, Derby; and Miss Marian Anderson, Girl Scout Executive, Derby.

During this period, the officers of the Association were:

President, The Rev. Henry S. Douglas
 Vice-Pres., Mrs. William G. Beardsley
 Secretary, Miss Maude Smith
 Treasurer, Mrs. Clarence Atwood

The former president, Mrs. Susan Kelley was re-elected President, 1937-38 and a Dance was given (with the co-operation of the Board of Education) for the Oxford Students graduating from high school.

"Well-Child" conferences were started with 86 children taking advantage of the opportunity.

Mrs. Kelley was re-elected president 1938-39 and a "Safety Campaign" was presented to the school children, with speakers and photo film from the State Motor Vehicle Dept. Mrs. Grace Harger, was elected president, 1939-40 and 1940-41. Many speakers were heard, including Mrs. Hubert Stoddard who spoke on "Our Town Library". A Strawberry Social and Neighborhood Supper was held.

As of Oct. 1, 1941, the enrolled membership had increased to 91. Mrs. Harriet Adkins was elected president, 1941-42 and 1942-43. The Welfare Committee was given money for milk for needy children and supplementary financial aid for those district schools serving hot lunches. Plans were made for summer swimming instruction for children from 4 to 12 years old, under the charge of the men members.

An Art Exhibit was held in May 1942 and Playground Equipment was provided for the schools.

An Immunization Clinic was held in 1942-43.

Mrs. Olive Allen was elected president 1943-44, but due to gasoline rationing, only four meetings were held.

Mrs. Carleton Pope was elected president, 1944-45 and 1945-46. Previous to 1945-46, the children had been transported to the Dental Clinic at the Dentist's office, but in that year the Clinic was started at the S. B. Church School, a committee of Association members furnishing transportation.

In 1946-47, Mrs. Jane Posypanko was president and arrangements were made for delivering milk at two schools at 4 1/2 cents per one fourth pint. The Board of Education was requested to require all school children to be vaccinated before starting school, but the Board voted against this action.

Mrs. Stephanie Larson was elected president 1947-48 and a project was started of taking gifts to the Christmas Party for patients in State Hospitals, and the Association went on record as favoring hot lunches in the new Consolidated School. Arrangements were made with the School Building Committee to provide special running water etc. for the Dental Clinic in the new school building.

Mrs. John Smedley was elected president 1948-49 and the Association membership totaled 108. The new Consolidated School was dedicated Dec. 18, 1948 and the first meeting of the Association in that building was held Jan. 10, 1949.

Mrs. Alice Boudreau was president 1949-50. The first P.T.A. Pre-school Survey was made, and the first P.T.A. dishes were purchased.

Mr. Joseph Gray was president 1950-51 and 1951-52. The new School Principal, Mr. Schade, introduced the practice of having the classrooms open following the Association meetings for parents' visits. The Association sponsored the Chest X-Ray examination which served over five-hundred people. During 1951-52, the Association set

up a School Library Committee, and the School Dental Program was dropped by the Association, it having become too large for the Association to handle, and was taken over by the Town Board of Education.

Mrs. Frances Schoenberg was president 1952-53 and 1953-54 and the first P.T.A. Trading Post was held Feb. 14, 1953. By 1954 there were 225 paid members of the Association.

Mrs. Laurence Peck was president 1954-55 and 1955-56. The object of the Association for 1954-55 was "Cooperation of P.T.A. with various Town Committees." A budget was set up for the first time, a flag was bought for the school auditorium, a "Father and Son Night" was held, and the Christmas Concert of the Oxford Choral Club was sponsored.

Mrs. Bruce Fisher was elected president for a two year term, 1956-58 and re-elected for a second two year term 1958-60.

In 1956-57 a scholarship of One Hundred dollars was instituted by the Association for an Oxford student, towards expenses for training as a "future teacher" at a Teacher's College or at a Liberal Arts College offering a teacher training program; this scholarship to be awarded on a basis of character, scholastic standing, interest in teaching and financial need. In the first year, there were no applications, so in the second year, 1957-58 two scholarships were awarded, and one in 1958-59.

In 1956-57 also, the Tuberculosis X-Ray Unit was sponsored.

In 1957-58 the first "Annual Harvest Ball" was held, a "Science Fair" for the students was sponsored, and a "Book Fair" was held for the first time. One of the regular Association meetings consisted of an International Dinner, the speaker being Mr. Toshie Urabe, of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations.

In 1958-59 a committee was appointed to help in the setting up of a School Library. In 1959-60 the Association again sponsored the Dental Clinic, as the Board of Education had dropped it for that year. The Oxford P.T.A. was chosen to present at the Connecticut State P.T.A. Convention, its project of the "Foreign Student Weekend", when Association members entertained in their homes, ten students from various foreign countries and at a P.T.A. dinner held at the school on Saturday evening.

The foregoing presents, we believe, an impressive list of accomplishments by the Association in School matters.

FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF MRS. MADORNO, THE FIREST PRESIDENT OF THE PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATION

"The movement for a Parent Teacher Association in Oxford started in the depths of the Great Business Depression. At that time, the little school in each district was in charge of a

schoolboard member who was to see that the school was supplied with wood, repairing broken windows and doors, painting if necessary, and cleaning in summer.

Center School was a two-room building and called the best in town. It had no electric light and on a fairly clear day, it was difficult to read ordinary print. Big boys were assigned to throw wood on the fire; it had water of a sort, but on "Clean-up Day," the first project was that some fathers came with cement and sand to cover the boards on the well so that while children were washing their hands, the water would not run back in to contaminate the well-water.

Riverside School was a tar-paper shack left over from the erection of Stevenson Dam and Reservoir. The stove stood in the doorway and nearly every child had scars and burns from trying to get past to get out the door.

Riggs Street School was so crowded that the teacher had to go outside to get to the back of the room.

Church School had no running water, although the neighboring houses did. There was a large outhouse attached to the school building.

Mr. Dunfield, Superintendent of schools, sent home to parents of children in Center School, notes asking them to come to visit the school. At the meeting, everyone had questions, particularly asking how anyone could learn in surroundings like this. It was decided to call a meeting in all the other schools in town, which proved to be an awakening, as parents could not believe their eyes. After these meetings in the schools, it was decided to call a meeting at the newly built "Grange Hall". As a result of this meeting, the Parent-Teacher Association was organized.

Active in this early work were Mrs. Madorno, Mrs. Currish, Miss Mary Nichols, Mrs. Dorothea Ives, Mrs. Sussanah Miles, Miss Mabel Lum, Miss Flora Roberts, Mrs. Cora Cable, Mrs. Michael Cassidy and the Rev. Henry S. Douglas. The teachers also worked hard, Mrs. Bice, Julia Crofut, Mrs. Kate Sanford, and Mrs. Guidice. Mr. Jesse King offered to match the town, dollar for dollar, to repair and fix up Riverside School, with the result that the school had running water and an inside toilet.

The School Board, while most were members of the new P.T.A., would not spend any money for improving the condition. The P.T.A. recommended that the schools close at 3:30 instead of 4:00 P.M. so the children could get home before dark. The School Board agreed to the change by shortening the afternoon recess, so that teachers worked the same number of hours as before.

The first hot lunch project consisted of teachers heating soup on top of the stoves and furnaces. A pre-school examination was

given free by the State Board. In the Riggs St. School every child was x-rayed and whole families were given care. Eyeglasses and dental care were provided for every child in need, of whom there were many, because their parents were out of work. The Association worked with the Red Cross distributing clothes provided by them in addition to meat, yeast, and salt. It also worked with the W.P.A. and N.R.A., finding jobs for the fathers and helping the needy. The George Washington Bi-centennial Celebration brought the townspeople together from all districts and united their efforts. A Fair for all children was held with prizes. One of the ideas of the Association that was incorporated into the Centralized School was the Cafeteria."

CHAPTER 33

PHYSICIANS AND HEALTH

PHYSICIANS

"The medical education of physicians in the latter part of the eighteenth century was exceedingly slight. A young man planning to enter the medical profession would serve as an apprentice to some practicing physician, helping in the preparation of drugs, and accompanying the doctor on his visits to patients. He and his tutor would be fortunate if they possessed a human skeleton, and opportunities for dissection of a human body were still more rare. But if the young man had a logical mind and a good memory, and that peculiar trait of character which engendered the confidence of his patients in him, he often times effected extraordinary cures."

Many people, now living, remember the dosages of sulphur and molasses in the Springtime, rhubarb and soda for "stomach disorders, etc." But best of all, they remembered the family doctor as a friend, available in all weathers and at any time, day or night. He and the minister and the school master were the three most looked up to citizens of the town.

DOCTOR HOSEA DUTTON

The earliest mention of a physician in Oxford is that of Dr. Hosea Dutton (sometimes recorded as Osee Dutton) who is said to have come to Oxford from Southington "about the time of the Revolution". He was born in 1754, son of John and Abigail Webster Dutton of Southington, Conn. The first actual record of him is his admission to the Oxford Congregational Society, June 24, 1781, so it is certain that he had come to Oxford at some time prior to that date. At that time, he was twenty-seven years old, so that it is likely that his first practice as a physician was in Oxford. Two years later, Jan. 19, 1783, he married Elizabeth Trowbridge, daughter of Israel and Mary Johnson Trowbridge of Oxford. Elizabeth was admitted to the Oxford Congregational Society the next year, 1784. The Oxford tax list for 1792, includes his name, as Osee Dutton.

Sometime between 1795 and 1812, he became an Episcopalian. His

name is not on the 1795 list of members of St. Peter's Church, but on May 30, 1812, he was elected Clerk of St. Peter's Parish. It was probably between 1800 and 1812 that he became an Episcopalian, as in 1800 his son, Sebastian was baptized in the Oxford Congregational Church.

Dr. Dutton was probably the first physician in Oxford. He built and lived in the house on Governor's Hill, later occupied by Dr. Lounsbury on what is now known as Lounsbury Road. He was self-educated, but nevertheless a man of culture, who made good progress in Latin, Greek and Hebrew without a tutor, and was an expert in mathematics. He spent his life in the practice of his profession, but nevertheless held many positions of trust in the town. He is said to have been somewhat eccentric, and bitterly opposed to the settlement of another physician in the town, even when there came a demand for one by reason of increased population; especially when Dr. Noah Stone encroached upon his territory.

He was Town Clerk from 1800 to 1802 and 1812 to 1815, and died in September of 1826, aged 72.

Dr. Dutton was quite changeable in his religious affiliations having been "first a Presbyterian, then a Methodist, afterwards a Baptist, and finally an Episcopalian".

The reason for his becoming an Episcopalian is not on record, but it is known that the religious revivals in some of the other Protestant churches around 1800 brought in their wake "much excitement and many indiscretions, and the Church of England received many adherents in consequence."

He and his wife, Elizabeth, had eleven children, some of whom had extraordinary names which indicate that Elizabeth was a reader of the romantic novels of that day! The eleven were named, John, Israel, Huldah, Alvina Clementina, Sophia Charlotte, Maria Sylvia, Eunice, Lemuel Phiolomela, Sebastian Maria, Ximenes Petruchio, and Thomas Albert Buonoparte Jefferson."

At the same time that Dr. Dutton was practicing in Oxford, namely in 1792, it is of interest to note that three Derby physicians presented a petition to the Derby town meeting asking that they be given permission to practice "enoculation" against small pox. This was a bold step, for inoculation was held by many to be attended by divine punishment. The three physicians were Edward Crafts, Samuel Sanford and Liberty Kimberly. The permission was granted Jan. 7, 1793. There seems, nevertheless, to have been some opposition, for a new petition signed by 33 persons was presented to town meeting five years later, Dec. 1798, asking that permission be given to Drs. Sanford and Crafts. Permission was granted, each physician, however, being required to inoculate in a separate hospital "under the restrictions of the authority and selectmen".

In 1795, the Legislature passed an act which gave unlimited power,

to the selectmen of any town, wherever contagious diseases should be prevalent to make specific regulations for the protection of the public health. It was apparently under this act that the selectmen gave the permission to the two doctors, Sanford and Crafts to practice inoculation.

Samuel Sanford came to Derby about 1790, "residing in the Seymour district, on the right hand corner" going up the Bungay Road, or West Church St.". Across the road towards Castle Rock, there was a pest house for small-pox patients, in which Derby as a town took an interest.

Little is known of Dr. Crafts other than that he came to Derby prior to 1793 and died in 1821 and is buried in the Uptown (Colonial) cemetery in Derby.

DOCTOR NOAH STONE

"Dr. Noah Stone came to Oxford from Guilford about 1810. He was born in 1782, so when he came to Oxford he was about 28 years old." As we have already stated, his starting to practice in Oxford was bitterly opposed by the long-settled Dr. Dutton.

"He was in active practice in Oxford many years and held many offices of trust, such as Judge of Probate, Justice of the Peace, Town Clerk and Treasurer." "He was a valued practitioner, a man exemplary in life, correct in deportment, a fair model for imitation".

He married Rosalind Merwin in 1810. He was admitted to the Oxford Congregational Church from the 2d church in Guilford Jan. 6, 1811. His wife was admitted the same day from the 1st church in Lyme. He was Town Clerk 1826-1828, 1830-31.

Their children were:

1. Mary Elizabeth b1811 died age 3 years
2. Eunice b1812
3. Martha b1814
4. Andrew b1815
5. David b1817

David Stone became editor of the New York Journal of Commerce. Martha Stone married the Rev. Stephen Hubbell, (a Congregational minister) in 1832, when she was eighteen years old and while residing in Oxford, wrote the book "Shady Side." It had a sale of forty thousand copies and was said to have had a great influence in increasing the salaries of ministers throughout New England and to have awakened a more just consideration for minister's families, than any one thing that had transpired".

Dr. Stone died in 1851.

DOCTOR JOHN LOUNSBURY

"Dr. John Lounsbury came to Oxford in 1840. He was born in Bethany in 1809, so was 31 years old at the time. He had prepared for college in the Wilbraham Academy, and entered Yale College in 1837. He practiced medicine in Hamden two years and removed to Oxford in 1840. He was a very thorough general student, as well as versed in Latin, Greek, French and Spanish, and especially learned in Botany. In treating chronic cases and some of long standing, such as swelled and ulcerated limbs and eczema, he excelled others of his age and time." He was noted for accumulating books of all sorts besides his liberal supply of medical books.

He was a great advocate of education and was the first to propose having Episcopal parochial schools for girls which he suggested in the diocesan convention at Hartford in 1874. He also wrote at that time, a letter to the well known Episcopal magazine, "The Churchman," in which he gave it as his opinion that Oxford would be a good place for such a school, stating that "it is a very healthy place, of proper elevation, with pure country air, pure and clean water and a mineral spring, which is already becoming somewhat famous. It is just the place for delicate girls to come to for the purpose of study, when their health would break down in a city. Land here is cheap now and I am prepared to give some to the school now, and others will give more, and between us we will lay the foundation if the Diocese will erect the edifice. We are not a wealthy people here; a plain town of farmers; but I am not afraid to say that we can raise \$5,000 among us, if the rest of the state will raise \$50,000.

Dr. Lounsbury's efforts to have an Episcopal Church School located in Oxford were unsuccessful. He died in 1895.

DR. LEWIS BARNES

As far back as 1875, and possibly earlier, Dr. Lewis Barnes was practicing in Oxford. In that year, the Oxford selectmen's report records that he had attended certain town paupers and also that he was registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. In that year, he was also Town Clerk and continued as such through 1900, being succeeded by George W. Hoxie. Dr. Barnes continued as Health Officer until his death July 5, 1908 at the age of 84.

He was the son of Dr. Julius Barnes of Southington. He was graduated from Yale in the class of 1847 and then taught at Bristol. During 1848-49, he studied medicine at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York City. He then entered the office of his uncle, Dr. Jordan Barnes in Buffalo, N. Y. and was graduated in 1850 from the Medical Department of the University of Buffalo. He located in

Meriden in 1854 and in 1856 he came to Oxford, being then about 32 years old, and continued to practice there until his death. He was Judge of Probate of Oxford for 23 years, Town Clerk for 30 years, and acting school visitor for 40 years. He was at one time president of the New Haven County Medical Society. He was active in State politics and was evidently one of Oxford's most distinguished citizens.

HEALTH CONDITIONS

As has been noted before, in 1795, an act was passed by the Connecticut Legislature which gave unlimited power to the Selectmen to make specific regulations for the protection of the public health. This act was followed by one passed in 1805 providing that the civil authority and the selectmen in each of the several towns should constitute a Board of Health with wide powers regarding health, such as requiring physicians to report communicable diseases, and the examination and removal of filth. In 1821, the act was further widened. Innoculation was put under the control of the Town Board of Health, which was empowered to provide vaccination of the town's inhabitants at public expense.

The first mention of a Town Board of Health in the Town reports is in the report for 1894, listing expenses of the Board of Health:

Lewis Barnes, inspecting and removing nuisances	\$2.50
Paid Health Officer for blanks	1.00
Attendance and expenses (2) county meetings	11.50

Dr. Barnes was apparently the first Health Officer. What his powers were is not known; probably merely the removal of nuisances. For some years previous, Dr. Barnes had been Registrar of Births, Deaths, and Marriages, at least as far back as 1875.

In 1897, appeared the first "Annual Report of Dr. Lewis Barnes, Health Officer of the Town of Oxford", reading in part as follows:

"Only ten cases of contagious or infectious diseases were reported during the official year ending Sept. 1st. Of these, three proved fatal; viz. one of whooping cough and two of diphtheria. Where there is a liability for a nuisance, it is prevented and a worse calamity possibly averted by the intelligent cooperation of the people. Neighborly suggestions as to unhealthy surroundings, and timely threats are a great protection from pestilence, and thereby "stink" is becoming a more obsolete word in our language. The death rate has been high (20 to 1000) but not excessively so, and old age (5 over 80), accident, and suicide (5 more) have been large factors in our mortality.

"Garbage is easily eliminated from being a nuisance in our country towns when it is properly utilized. Our sewage, although

sometimes conducted to cesspools and again in cases used for nearby irrigation and fertilization, is mostly carried off by open surface drains, which as they generally exist are a detriment to contiguous wells, a stench for the living apartments and a menace to the health of our homes. The "Klondike" of our farmers is the dairy, and my observation for years is that the milk supply is clean and that the dairy products from Oxford are always in demand because they are good and pure."

In 1898, the Health Officer says, "One of our selectmen has publicly declared that 'Health laws are useless and ought not to be enforced.' It is safe to say that if one case of measles which happened last winter had been thoroughly quarantined at the outset of the attack, hundreds of dollars and life itself would have been saved to the community and weary hours of care and sickness averted."

In 1899, he states, "Our sewage in a hilly country, abounding in rivulets and streams is largely in that direction and almost uniformly by surface drains. What we need is better driveways (roads) and a little public spirit. A trolley through our valley to connect Seymour with Woodbury would make Oxford a residential village."

In 1900, "Our milk producers and butter makers are adopting plans for cleanly stables and clean cows with dustless udders. And now they have learned that the milk must not stand in the open awaiting other labor, but must be immediately prevented from undergoing decomposition, and by constantly improving methods fitted for market, and the nearer this is with the milk supply the better for all parties."

1901, "Sewage is by surface drains too frequently discharging into the street in violation of the law, and often into nearby streams. Cesspools are a necessity, but their contents should frequently go to the cultivated fields. The paper mill on Eight Mile Brook is again running and cattle will drink roadside water in preference to that of the stream."

1902, "Sewage is largely by surface drains. Some of our farmers utilize the waste by tanks mounted on wheels, thereby giving irrigation to nearby fields."

1904. This year, the Health Officer, Dr. Barnes appeared to be a little more optimistic about health conditions. He reports "The sanitary condition of the town is annually improving as is evidenced by the home with its more cleanly surroundings. The lawn mower has become a necessity, weeds and decay are less abundant, the out-buildings are more odorless, everything in fact denoting that an intelligent and health-loving power is directing affairs, and by example inducing others to increased sanitation." He reports however that fully one-half of the school children

have not been vaccinated against small-pox and remarks that "Frequent travel and scooting tramps afford a constant liability to small-pox, and vaccination should be regarded as a public necessity, for every unvaccinated person is liable to be a menace to his neighbor's life."

1905 Dr. Barnes, the health officer reports the health of the town to have been unusually good during the year. He still was having trouble with some people who avoided having a placard on an infected house, "thereby becoming a menace and expense to their community."

1906 Dr. Barnes reports that Connecticut has formed a State Board of Health and given to each county, municipality, and township to whom are assigned plenary powers for promoting the sanitary and hygienic condition of the State.

1907 "The condition of the Eight Mile Brook below the paper mill is positively bad."

With 1907, the colorful reports of Dr. Barnes came to an end because of his death in July of that year.

His successor, Glover Cable, not a physician, says "there is one stream which is said to be polluted by the refuse from a paper mill."

1909, Mr. Cable reported "the condition of Eight Mile Brook has been very bad owing to the extreme drouth during the past summer. We visited the Diamond Match Co. in August and made suggestions which were promptly attended to."

1915, "Ice from Eight Mile Brook has been condemned."

1916, Report of one case of infantile paralysis, a very mild case.

1919, Nelson Cable succeeded Glover Cable.

1920, Cyrus Shelton succeeded Nelson Cable.

1927, one case of infantile paralysis.

1943 Health Officer Oscar Rogol, M.D. reported "At Camp Palmer a number of cases of poliomyelitis were discovered. They were confined only in the camp to which children came from out of town. The camp was closed. No cases of town residents were reported."

1945, Plans are being perfected to have a periodic health examination of the school children each year.

1947 "The school buildings require major repairs. Most have woodburning stoves which give insufficient heat, and there is no running water to take care of sanitation needs. The drinking water supply is a major problem, most of the water being brought into the buildings from outside. This year, school-rooms have been overcrowded because of the greatly increased registration. It seem to me that the solution to the whole problem is a consolidated school. This is highly recommended by the Health Officer."

The Centralized School became a reality November 22, 1948 when it was occupied by the children, since when health matters have become more or less routine.

The Health Officer's reports from 1947 to 1960 are concerned largely with the care of the health of the children in the town schools. In 1947, he pointed out that the little old one and two room local schools have wood burning stoves which give insufficient heat, and have no running water to take care of sanitation needs, and in one school which had a pump the water never passed state laboratory tests.

Nevertheless, the continuation of the immunization program in the schools has placed Oxford high on the list of towns in the State having the greatest percentage of children immunized.

In 1949, he notes that this program is being continued and that the two summer camps in the town were inspected regularly, emphasis being placed on possible contagion, especially poliomyelitis.

He also notes that with the opening of the Consolidated School most of the problems in the school have been solved.

In 1950 he calls attention to the overcrowding in the new school and the necessity for enlargement of the school.

In 1952 he mentions two serious sanitation problems, one a piggery, the other a dump, making clear the necessity for a town sanitary code.

In 1953 the title "Health Officer" was changed to "Director of Health."

A marked advance occurred in 1954 with the opening of the new Dump on Riggs St. which is open only at specified times at which the dump is supervised.

"In the building boom, dwellings have been oftentimes constructed without regard to proper drainage. This should not be allowed to continue and to prevent it a town ordinance should be enacted prohibiting construction until the sewage facilities have been approved by a duly authorized official.

During 1955, about 85 per cent of the Oxford School children in the five to nine year group received two inoculations of the Salk poliomyelitis vaccine. The next year, nearly all of the pupils of the consolidated school were given the third inoculation. Also adults up to forty years of age were given the opportunity of receiving two inoculations.

In 1957, an ordinance was adopted by the town "Covering Sewage Disposal for Dwellings" as previously recommended by the Director of Health. During the year over half the school population was ill with the Asian Influenza, and vaccine was not available early enough, but fortunately most cases were mild.

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING FOR SEWAGE DISPOSAL
IN THE TOWN OF OXFORD

SEPTIC TANKS shall be provided where no public sewers are available. No tank shall be located within 15 feet of a house. These tanks may be of concrete, tile or metal. They shall be constructed with watertight walls and bottom, with inlets and outlets baffled or submerged for a depth of at least 12 inches below the surface of liquid in the tank but shall not be so deep as to stir up the bottom contents. They shall be made with removable covers so as to provide access to the tank for purposes of cleaning. No septic tank shall have a liquid capacity of less than 500 gallons.

In all of the following specifications, one family is considered as 5 persons. Where it is known that a larger number of persons are to be provided for in one family, proportional increases in the sizes of the system shall be made. Similar considerations apply to house for more than one family.

NO DRAINAGE FROM A SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEM shall be discharged into a street gutter or watercourse or on to the surface of the ground without the approval of the local health officer.

PRIVIES shall be constructed with adequate storage space for excreta, with self-closing seat covers and fly-tight vault, and with screen vent from the vault to the atmosphere.

NO SEPTIC TANK, CESSPOOL, TILE FIELD, LEACHING TRENCH, OR PRIVY VAULT shall be constructed within 75 feet of a well or spring without the approval of the local health officer.

SINK DRAINAGE SYSTEMS where no water flush toilet fixtures are used shall be constructed with at least one-third the capacity specified for usual house sewerage systems.

THIS ORDINANCE PASSED AT THE ANNUAL TOWN MEETING OF OCTOBER 1, 1956.

There were two cases of poliomyelitis in Oxford in 1959 and the Director of Health again emphasized the necessity of three inoculations of the Salk vaccine with a booster inoculation once a year thereafter.

In the same year a part time Public Health Nursing Service was instituted in Oxford.

CHAPTER 34

CEMETERIES

In earliest times, the dead of Oxford were presumably carried to Derby for burial, but in 1741 the Oxford church was established, and in 1742 the church Meeting voted to lay out a piece of land for a burying place. This is undoubtedly the present cemetery of the Oxford Congregational Church which is situated on the eastern slope of Governors Hill, just west of Little River, and it appears to be the oldest cemetery within the present confines of the town of Oxford.

The cemetery of St. Peter's Episcopal Church is also located on the eastern slope of Governors Hill, just west of, and adjoining the cemetery of the Oxford Congregational Church.

In Quaker Farms there are two cemeteries, the oldest of which is the "Old South Burying Grounds", now known as "Hillside Cemetery". Its earliest inscription is that of Mrs. Hannah Russell, wife of Timothy Russell of Oxford. She died May 26, 1773, aged 76 years. The cemetery is situated on Capt. Wooster Road a short distance east of Quaker Farms Road. This cemetery was in general use by the Quaker Farms families until David Tomlinson started another, the "North Burying Grounds," now known as "Brookside Cemetery". It is situated on the east side of Edmonds Road, close by Eight Mile Brook, from which it takes its name, about one quarter of a mile north of the point where Edmonds Road branches off from Quaker Farms Road.

Two prominent early residents of Quaker Farms are buried in these cemeteries, the one, Zachariah Hawkins in the South Burying Grounds in 1806, and the other, David Tomlinson in the North Burying Grounds in 1822. An elderly citizen, when asked some years ago, how there came to be two burying grounds so close together, replied that "He guessed that old David Tomlinson didn't want to be buried in no Hawkins cemetery".

By the end of the Nineteenth Century, the two Quaker Farms Cemeteries had become somewhat neglected, which caused great concern to an active member of Christ Church, Quaker Farms, Mr. Benjamin Nichols. While apparently the church did not own either of the cemetery properties, nevertheless Mr. Nichols seems to have felt that it was the duty of the church to take care of them, so in his will, he made a bequest for that purpose to "The Trustees of Donations and Bequests of the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut". Mr. Nichol's daughter, Mrs. Henry P. Wirth, (Nancy Nichols) got the people of Christ Church

working together in 1898 and put the cemeteries in good order, and at her instance the "Quaker Farms Cemetery Association" was formed on May 10th of that year. The Association took over the management of the two cemeteries, and by now has become the de facto owner of the properties, although the income from the Nichols Fund continues to be paid to Christ Church by the Trustees of Donations and Bequests. In turn, the church passes an annual resolution making the Association its agent for the year, for "cemetery matters".

The third cemetery in the western part of the town is that now known as "Riverside Cemetery", situated on the west side of Freeman Road, between it and Lake Zoar, just north of the corner of Freeman Road and Coppermine Road. It was originally located on the east bank of the Housatonic River about one quarter mile north-west of its present location. It was then known as "Zoar Bridge cemetery" and it came into use Sep. 14, 1805 with the death of Andrew Gibson Scott. When Stevenson Dam was completed in 1920, it became necessary to flood the cemetery and some time before that, probably about 1918, the gravestones and the contents of the graves were moved to "Riverside Cemetery". The cemetery is now under the care of the Riverside Methodist Episcopal Church.

The cemetery known as "Southford Cemetery" is really located in Oxford, being at the southeast corner of Oxford Road and Hawley Road. It has been used by many Oxford families including the Lums, Davis, Rowlands and others. It is now in the care of the "Southford Cemetery Association."

"Jacks Hill Cemetery" is located on the west side of Heidkamp Road a short distance north of Jacks Hill Road where the latter bends sharply eastward from a generally northerly course. Members of the Perkins, Wheeler, Buckingham, Robinson and other families are buried there. It is now badly in need of care.

CHAPTER 35

THE OXFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The first library in the town was known as the Oxford "Circulating Library." It was instituted by St. Peter's Episcopal Church, when the Rev. S. R. Bailey was its rector. It was projected December 5th, 1883, and was established the following year by the St. Peter's Womens' Guild. Not long after this, it passed under the management of Mr. W. W. Hughes, who continued to serve as voluntary librarian as late as 1892 and "succeeded in making the library an object of public support" with one hundred and fifty persons interested as members that year, and the library then contained 700 volumes kept at the residence of Mr. Hughes on the west side of Little River just north of Lounsbury Road and facing the Town Green. His place was known as the Oxford Valley Fruit Farm and his home is said to have been the headquarters for literary, musical and other entertainments in Oxford. His second wife was Miss Emily McEwen of Oxford. As he was born in 1823, he was 69 years old in 1892. How much longer he ran the library is not on record, but he lived until 1904, aged 81.

What happened to the library between Mr. Hughes' death in 1904 to the year 1925 does not appear to be on record, but in about the latter year, the library was re-activated, chiefly through the efforts of the Rev. Henry S. Douglas, Mrs. Irving Sanford (Kate) and Mrs. Hubert E. Stoddard, and along with them the School Supervisor, I. B. Dunfield. There were about 200 very old books in the library at that time, stored in the Congregational parish house.

A "Library Association" was formed, of which Mr. Hubert E. Stoddard was the first and only president. Mrs. Eames was the first librarian, without pay for a few years.

In 1925, the School Supervisor stated in his report printed in the Oxford Town Report for 1925, "The Public Library greatly benefited the schools." Mrs. Eames was very helpful in assisting the children. A total of 1119 books were read from the approved list and Library Reading Certificates were awarded to all who read five books or more.

In 1926, the Town made an appropriation of \$100.00 to the Town Library, and the School Report said; "The local library has been a splendid help to the schools and the town should support it generously." About this time, Mrs. Eames was paid \$50.00 per year as librarian. She was succeeded by Miss Libby Pope, Mrs. Zellars, Mrs. Harrison Miles and Miss Hawkins.

In 1928, the appropriation was \$150.00 and by 1950 it had climbed to \$300.00.

About this time the state offered to give the town \$200.00 worth of books if it would raise \$200.00. The people of the town were canvassed to give one dollar, each thereby becoming a member of the "Library Association".

The Congregational Church gave the association the use of a little side room in the parish house with a low sloping roof, which was raised to give more shelf space. Some money was raised by selling ice cream and cold drinks at school affairs which were held annually on the green. The library remained in the Congregational Church parish house until 1933, when the Town Hall on the Green at Governor's Hill Road was erected and one room was allotted to the Library.

Up to the early autumn of 1951, the library continued as a private affair. Then the Library was turned over to the town, so beginning the first Public Library in Oxford. The First Selectman, Frederick R. Bice, Jr. appointed a Board of Library Directors consisting of Edmund Schade, Mr. Norris Hillseberg, Mrs. Cathryn Beardsley, Mrs. Arthur Hoyt, William Rice and Mrs. Jane Fryncko.

Mr. Hillseberg, who became the first chairman, moved out of town and Mr. Rice resigned. To replace these, Calvin Williams and Mrs. Eleanore Johnquest were voted in by the board. Miss Charlotte Dahinden had served as Librarian of the Private Library and she was appointed by the Board to continue under the same terms. In July, 1952, Mrs. Hoyt became chairman. The sum of \$240.75 was turned over to the New Board by the Private Group.

It was felt that larger quarters would be needed and a vote at a Town Meeting assigned the Library to the north room of the Central Fire House and \$520.00 was voted for renovation of the new quarters.

In July 1952, Mrs. Hoyt was elected Chairman, Mrs. Johnquest, Secretary, Mr. George Scott was appointed to take the place of Mr. Calvin Williams.

The new Library in that building was begun at an "open house", Oct. 19, 1952. Mrs. Fryncko resigned in May, 1953 and Mr. Charles Lubin took her place. Eleven hundred books were added during these ten months. At present the library contains about 8,000 books.

All six members of the Appointed Board were elected in October 1953. Gabriel Mason was elected to the board in 1957, and Felix Kurzrok in 1958. The present board consists of George Scott, Chairman; Edmund Schade, Sabina C. Hoyt, Pauline Tomlinson, Cathryn Beardsley, and Rose Rzesutek.

The library is open as frequently as funds permit at present, with the board members taking over one night a week and school children coming during the day.

In February 1958, a group of adults organized, calling themselves "Friends of the Oxford Library." This group has been immeasurably helpful in having story hours, lectures and exhibits at the Library. In

addition, they have greatly benefited the board by donating services one night a week, the assignments managed by Miss Beatrice Wesley, and in 1960, by Mrs. Mary Hitchcock.

The present appropriation for the Library is \$500.00 from the State and \$1500.00 from the Town.

CHAPTER 36

TOWN HALL BUILDING

At the instance of the Board of Finance, the Town appointed a Committee of three, to prepare plans, and select a location for a Town Office Building, in 1933. Before that date, the Town Records were said to have been stored in a barn just across Governor's Hill Road from the present Town Hall, or at the residence of whatever Town Clerk was in office at the time.

The Committee consisted of Rev. Henry S. Douglas, Messrs. Thomas Schreiber, and Frederick R. Bice Jr. They recommended that the new building should be located at the north end of the "Lower Green," adjoining the Episcopal Church, and approximately twenty feet from Little River. The Committee consulted with Mr. Alton Clark, "a practical designer and architect" and decided that the building should be 26 feet by 32 feet, one story high, that it should be fire-proof, with walls of fieldstone, and contain a vault, a room for the Town Clerk, to be used also for meetings of Town Committees, and a room for the library.

The Committee's recommendations were followed and \$2500.00 was appropriated. The Building was erected in 1933, using in general, unemployed Town labor. The Town Hall was dedicated the same year.

CHAPTER 37

SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

The early reports of the Selectmen do not appear to have been preserved. Those, however, from 1875 to 1950 were kept by the late Mr. Atwater C. Treat, and are now in possession of his widow.

In the 1875 report the largest single item of Town Expenses was for Roads, Bridges and Railings, \$2024.04.

It may seem strange to people of to-day that the second largest item of Town Expenses was for care of paupers, \$650.02, amounting to 18 per cent of the total Expense of \$3612.26. The Board of Education spent only \$158.87, this being apparently entirely for expense of visiting schools by seven visitors, as the salaries of school teachers were not paid by the town, but by each school district separately. Another strange item to modern eyes was that of \$60.00 paid for sheep killed by dogs. This figure jumped to \$753.50 in the next year, 1876, and the Selectmen reported that "the amount paid for sheep killed by dogs has been larger than ever before known, and if some means cannot be found to prevent such wholesale destruction, sheep culture will be destroyed entirely in our farming towns, as neighboring towns are suffering as heavily as we."

It is said that the strange part of these attacks on sheep by dogs, is that the dogs do not eat the sheep, but choke them apparently from a natural antipathy.

In 1876, the distribution of sheep killed was as follows, - John Hawkins, 13 sheep; Orlando C. Osborn, 35; Lewis B. Perkins, 57; David C. Riggs, 22; Benjamin Nichols, 10; John Hawley, 9; George Hawley, 2; Peter Ward, 1; F. L. Davis, 1.

The report of the Selectmen for 1875, is a slim pamphlet of but eight 5" by 8" pages, but their reports soon increased in volume and it is from these reports that the statistics in this history are taken.

CHAPTER 38

TOWN FINANCES

For many years, whenever the town had need for money more than current income, it borrowed money from individuals, giving them town notes bearing interest at 5%. This system continued until after the formation of the Valley National Bank in Seymour in 1900 (which became the Seymour Trust Co., August 14, 1905.) In 1902, the town borrowed \$2000. from the bank. Even then, loans from individuals continued, in decreasing amounts, along with loans from the bank in increasing amounts, until 1933, when the Town issued its first bonds bearing interest at 4 1/2%. In the Town Report of 1875, mention is made of "Notes and orders outstanding," but no list of the holders of notes is given. In 1876, continuing until 1880, the total borrowing amounted to \$600. one half on note to C. H. Lum, and the other half to Henry Lum. In 1876, the Town in partnership with Monroe undertook to rebuild Zoar Bridge across the Housatonic River, as a steel suspension bridge. It cost \$13,225.78, each town paying one half of the expense or \$6612.89. This amount was increased about \$1000, later, for in 1880, the Zoar Bridge Account was funded at 5%, again from individuals, as follows:

Note Aug. 4, 1880 to Francis A. Riggs	\$1000.00
Note Aug. 4, 1880 to Carrie L. Riggs	175.00
Note Aug. 4, 1880 to Burritt Davis	100.00
Note Aug. 4, 1880 to Lucinda Davis	500.00
Note July 30, 1880 George Lum	1000.00
Note July 30, 1880 Harpin A. Lum	4800.00
Total	7575.00

By 1885, the Zoar Bridge Account had been absorbed into "Town Liabilities" the notes payable to individuals being:

H. A. Lum	\$4000.00
George Lum	1000.00
Carrie L. Riggs	175.00
Francis Riggs	500.00
Eliza Tomlinson	1000.00

Other liabilities amounted to \$3159.00, making total \$9834.00.

By 1900, the total of notes payable to individuals had risen to \$17,976.00:

Mary Davis, guardian	\$7200.00
Charles A. Davis	4000.00
Mrs. R. B. Limburner	2576.00
Mary N. Davis	1200.00
" "	800.00
Albert Lum	1000.00
Susan J. Lum	500.00
Jane White	500.00
Florence L. Treat	200.00
	<hr/>
	\$17,976.00
Note to the Town Deposit Fund	4,169.00
	<hr/>
	\$22,145.00

The increase in borrowings seems to have been caused by the payment, with interest, of old orders issued by the selectmen from time to time, and which accumulated to a total of \$7071.30.

In 1903, the Town got its first bank loan (from the Valley National Bank) in amount \$2000.00, increasing its total borrowings to \$19276.00. In 1904, the borrowings took a decided increase with loans to individuals amounting to \$23145.00 plus \$2000.00 to the bank. By 1932, the year before the first bond issue, the notes to individuals amounted to \$11300.00 and to the bank \$29,700.00.

At the annual Town Meeting, October 5, 1931, a motion was passed calling for the establishment and election of a Town Board of Finance at the next Annual Town Meeting. On October 3, 1932, the first Town Board of Finance was elected as follows:

Hubert E. Stoddard	3 yrs.	Viola A. Madorno	3 yrs.
Robert I Sanford	2 yrs.	John W. Pope	2 yrs.
Edward P. Rowland	1 yr.	Michael J. Cassidy	1 yr.

The first detailed report of a Board of Finance was for 1935. In their list of expenditures, the largest item is for Education, \$26,718.72, and the total disbursements, \$49,858.40. The school expenditure is in marked contrast to that for 1900, when the old school district system was still in force, and the total expenditures for schools was \$2846.35.

The present (1960) Board consists of:

M. Nicholas Posypanko	Daniel Gill
Edwin H. Koehler	Richard E. Malkin
Howard W. Hine	William A. Bauer

There have been but three Chairmen of the Board since its beginning:

Hubert E. Stoddard	1932 to June 30, 1950
C. Arthur Maybury	1950 to December 11, 1959
M. Nicholas Posypanko	1959 to date.

CHAPTER 39

CHANGES IN THE MAP OF OXFORD WITH POPULATION TRENDS

1. Oxford gets section east of the Naugatuck River, 1798. It will be remembered that when the Ecclesiastical Society of Oxford was formed, May 7th, 1741, by action of the General Assembly, the southern boundary was the Little River and the eastern boundary of the southern portion of the new Society was set at the Naugatuck River, so that the southeastern corner was at the junction of Little River and the Naugatuck River. When the town of Oxford was incorporated in 1798, Derby gave up an additional section of its territory east of the Naugatuck River. It started at "the mouth of the brook at the lower end of old Rimmon Plain." (This was either "Rimmon Brook" or "Mud Brook".) The line crossed over the top of Rock Rimmon to its northern end. There it turned abruptly east to the Woodbridge line and along that line generally northward to the southerly line of Salem Society and west along that line to the Naugatuck River. At the same time, however, the eastern part of the southern boundary of the new town of Oxford was set at or near Five Mile Brook, till it reached the bridge over that brook at Rockhouse Hill Road, and from thence by a line running generally easterly to and across the Naugatuck River. From thence it turned north to the mouth of Rimmon or Mud Brook as already described.
2. Oxford gets northern section formerly part of Waterbury, 1803. Part of the northern section of the old Society of Oxford, as laid out in 1741, was in the town of Waterbury, and so continued after the incorporation of the town of Oxford in 1798, until October of 1803, when the Assembly transferred the section to the town of Oxford.
3. Oxford gets northern section formerly part of Southbury, 1809. Similar action was taken by the Assembly in October of 1809, regarding that part of the old Society of Oxford lying in the town of Southbury.
4. Oxford loses section east of the Naugatuck River to Bethany, 1839. Oxford continued to have the section east of the Naugatuck as part of its territory from 1798 until 1839, when the inhabitants of that region petitioned to have it transferred to the town of Bethany, because the "distance of Oxford is over a very mountainous region and greater than to Bethany."
5. Oxford gets section north of Four Mile Brook, 1844. It will be remembered that when the Parish of Oxford was formed in 1741, its southern boundary was along Four Mile Brook, but that the Town of

Oxford as formed in 1798, only extended south as far as Five Mile Brook. This condition continued until 1844. At this time, Derby was a Whig town, while Oxford was Democratic. Eight Mile Brook was the dividing line between the towns of Oxford and Derby, and in consequence, the people south of the brook went to Derby to vote, while those north of the brook voted in Oxford. In those days the lines of demarcation were not always closely observed and some took their choice of a voting place, and went to the nearest. Henry Lum, a sterling old Democrat, familiarly known as "Uncle Harry", determined to engineer a change in the Oxford Town Line. So he arranged for the introduction of a bill in the Connecticut Assembly, allowing Oxford to annex from Derby, all of the Punkups Section, south of the Brook and part of the Squantuck section. The bill was passed May 1, 1844, the boundaries of the annexed section being roughly as follows:-

Starting from the south side of Loughlin Road and following along the south side of Little Punkup Road and Punkup Road to where the latter crosses Five Mile Brook, thence along Five Mile Brook to Rock House Hill Road. Thence Southeast down Rock House Hill Road to the bridge over Four Mile Brook, thence in a straight line southwest to the Housatonic River.

6. Oxford loses section to the new town of Naugatuck, 1844. Naugatuck was originally part of Waterbury, the southern part of which was first known as "Judd's Meadows" and later as Salem Society. In 1803, Salem and Columbia Societies petitioned the General Assembly for the privileges of a township. Oxford opposed this, but on May 16th of that year appointed Abel Wheeler and Joseph Lum a committee to treat with the proposed new "Town of Salem and Columbia Societies" and agree on a dividing line between Oxford and the new town. (The Columbia parish became the town of Prospect in 1827). Apparently, no further action was taken until 1844, when the General Assembly passed a resolution, incorporating a "distinct town by the name of Naugatuck", formed from parts of Bethany, Oxford and Waterbury. Naugatuck adjoins the northeast section of Oxford, and the part of Oxford given up to it was a tract of land lying west of the Naugatuck River, the west boundary of which was a line starting from the River at a point just south of Spruce Brook and running in a generally northwest direction to the northern line of Oxford. The eastern boundary of Oxford then became the Naugatuck River as far north as a point just below Spruce Brook and from thence the line above described. On Apr. 27, 1844, the Oxford Town Meeting voted to appoint a committee instructed to assent to the petition of Wm. DeForest and others that the Town of Oxford give up to the petitioners a portion of territory for the proposed new town, the dwelling house of Larmon Lewis and Mrs. Sarah Lewis, his mother, and also the dwelling house lately occupied by Lewis M. Hoadley, Esq.

7. Oxford loses section to the new town of Seymour, 1854. In 1850, the village of Humphreysville separated from Derby, and incorporated as a town, named after Thomas H. Seymour, the newly elected governor of Connecticut. In 1853, the Assembly resolved that the boundary line between Oxford and Seymour should be that fixed in the perambulation made May 4th, 1853. Then in 1854, the Assembly passed a resolution annexing to Seymour a part of Oxford lying in the southeast part of the town, and south of a line which was approximately as follows; starting at the house of Mrs. Sabra Lindley on the west bank of Little River opposite Mountain Road and running from thence to a point on "Diamond Rock" (just south of Rimmon Hill), thence to and across the Naugatuck River to a point just South of Rock Rimmon. It is interesting to note that it was agreed that the selectmen of Derby and Seymour would apportion the funds of these towns etc., and if they could not agree, then the apportionment was to be made by Samuel Meigs, Esq. of Oxford. He was selected for this duty, because being a citizen of neither Derby nor Seymour, he would be neutral in his judgment. As he was born in 1791, he was 59 years old in 1850 and was in general mercantile business in Quaker Farms, having succeeded in 1822, to the operation of the store there, which had been founded by his father-in-law, David Tomlinson, and which did a very extensive business. Samuel Meigs was therefore, probably the leading business man of Oxford.

8. Oxford loses a section to the new town of Beacon Falls, 1871. Early in 1871, John Wolfe and others "petitioned the Assembly for the creation of a new town, Beacon Falls, out of portions of Bethany, Naugatuck, Seymour and Oxford." On June 1, 1871, the "Seymour Record" reported that "last week the representatives of Oxford together with the selectmen (of Seymour) appeared before the legislative committee and testified that in their judgment it would in no way be injurious to Oxford to lose that portion of it, which is asked for." The Assembly approved this action June 30, 1871, and by this action, Oxford lost all of the section bounded on the west by the present Oxford line (about one half mile east of Chestnut Tree Hill Road) and on the east by the Naugatuck River and the Town of Naugatuck.

"The first town meeting of Beacon Falls was held July 3, 1871. A picnic in the Grove was held July 4th with the following guests from Oxford; Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Harger and daughter, John Harger, Wm. H. Davis and daughter, B. Nichols and wife, Clark Botsford, Wm. R. Tomlinson, John Wheeler, H. C. Chatfield, O. Chatfield, B. Tucker, Burritt Davis, H. Sutton, and Atwater Treat."

From the foregoing, it is seen that the eastern boundary of Oxford went through several changes, which are summarized as follows:

- 1741 - Parish of Oxford's eastern boundary was the Naugatuck River.
 - 1798 - Incorporated Town of Oxford's eastern boundary was the Woodbridge Line.
 - 1839 - Oxford gave up to the town of Bethany the southern portion of the territory east of the Naugatuck River, thus making Oxford's eastern boundary the Naugatuck River.
 - 1844 - Oxford gave up to the new town of Naugatuck a tract of land lying west of the Naugatuck River, the west boundary of which was a line starting from the River at a point just south of Spruce Brook and running in a generally northwest direction to the northern line of Oxford, making the eastern boundary of Oxford the Naugatuck River up to a short distance below Spruce Brook and from thence the line above described.
 - 1871 - Oxford gave up to the new town of Beacon Falls all of Oxford territory lying east of its present boundary.
- At the present time, the Town of Oxford comprises 18,565.58 acres.

BOUNDARIES OF THE OLD PARISH OF OXFORD, AND THOSE OF ORIGINAL TOWN OF OXFORD

The Parish of Oxford as organized in 1741 was considerably greater in extent than the Town of Oxford as incorporated in 1798, particularly in the location of the Eastern boundary. To show this more clearly we give below the boundaries in parallel columns:

SOCIETY OF OXFORD PARISH 1741	TOWN OF OXFORD 1798
Beginning at the great (Housatonic) river at the line between Woodberry and Derby Thence southerly by the river to the mouth of <u>four mile brook</u>	Beginning at mouth of Kettletown Brook; thence Southerly on Ousatonic River to Heap of stones north of house of Noah Tomlinson; then n.e. to the bend in <u>five mile brook</u> at the foot of the hill
Thence along sd brook to the bridge between the dwelling houses of Abel Gunn and John Holbrook.	Thence by sd brook to the bridge over sd brook in Woodbury Old Road
Thence by the highway between land called Camps Mortgage and land called Quakers Farm Purchase to the Little River. Thence along Little River to Naugatuck River	Thence to S.E. corner of dwelling house of Timothy Johnson
Thence northerly by western shore of sd river (Naugatuck) to dividing line between Derby & Waterbury.	Thence due east to Naugatuck River
	Thence across sd river to Eastern Shore
	thence up said river on east side there of to mouth of brook at lower end of old Rimmon plain.

Thence to end of hill on northerly side of sd brook at lower end of Rock Rimmon

Thence on ridge of sd rock to the upper end of said rock

Thence a due east course to Woodbridge line. Thence on dividing line between Woodbridge and Derby till it meets Waterbury Line.

Thence on dividing line between Waterbury and Derby or Oxford till it meets Southbury. Thence on dividing line between Southbury and Derby or Oxford to 1st mentioned bound.

Thence westerly on dividing line between Waterbury & Derby to the eight mile brook.

Thence along said brook to dividing line between Woodberry and Derby,

Thence westerly on this line to the great river and bounds first mentioned.

BOUNDARIES OF OXFORD TODAY

Area: 32.8 square miles

Bounded on the North by Towns of Southbury
Middlebury
Naugatuck

East by " "
Naugatuck
Beacon Falls
Seymour

South by " "
Seymour
Housatonic River

West by " "
Housatonic River
Southbury

Population Trends

The population of Oxford, as given in the Connecticut State Manual is as follows,-

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>
1800	1410	1860	1269	1920	998
1810	1453	1870	1338	1930	1141
1820	1683	1880	1120	1940	1375
1830	1763	1890	902	1950	2037
1840	1626	1900	952	1960	3306
1850	1564	1910	1020		

On the curve shown in Chapter 16, the peak point in 1830 reflects the growth of the local industries, in Oxford and the low point in 1890 is the result of the extinction of those industries.

The curve shows also the population of Seymour, the growth of which started with the completion of the railroad to Waterbury in 1849, coinciding with the elimination of Oxford’s local industries.

Between 1940 and 1960, Oxford changed gradually from a predominately farming community to a “regional suburb” of Seymour, Bridgeport, Stratford, New Haven and other surrounding towns.

CHAPTER 40

INDUSTRY IN OXFORD TODAY

Oxford today, while still essentially rural, is no longer predominately a farming community, nor is it an industrial one. An examination of the chart of the population of Oxford given in Chapter 16 shows an extraordinary increase from about 1000 persons in 1920 to over 2000 in 1950, and it is now estimated to be 3306. With very few exceptions the newcomers have not been farmers, but families, one or more of whose members work in some factory or business as far south and west as Bridgeport, and east and north to Waterbury. The same thing has happened in many other towns throughout the United States, and a new phrase, "regional suburb" has been coined to express their status. This presents many problems in government, finances, schools, and churches. At the present time there are no sizable industries in Oxford, with the exception of the Stephen B. Church Co. drillers of deep driven wells and furnishers of water systems for towns.

Stephen Betts Church, founder of the company was born August 15, 1866, son of John and Sarah M. Whiting Church. When he came to manhood, the farmers were turning to the use of power in their farming operations to save hand labor. As early as 1886, Mr. Church provided and installed horse driven forks which lifted hay from wagon to haymow. Later he became interested in the early gasoline engines, exhibiting the first to be shown at the Danbury Fair. He soon was selling them in quantities, with a store in Boston and salesmen traveling throughout New England.

Mr. Church soon sensed the need of the farmers for running water, and began the building and erection of wells operated by windpower, which pumped water from wells, springs or brooks to tanks on towers, thereby providing the necessary pressure. But as these windmills were decidedly limited both in capacity and steady power, he began drilling deep driven wells (often spoken of as "artesian wells"). Soon he was installing the present residential water supply systems consisting of a driven well pumped by an electric motor pump into a closed tank inside the house, thus providing air pressure to force the water into kitchens, bathrooms, and barns.

By about 1923, demand came from factories for water in quantities not procurable from driven wells, and geologists pointed out that there were glacial deposits of sand and gravel in some places in New England which contained large quantities of water.

The Church Co. devised special equipment for testing for the presence of underground water and a method of sinking large caissons and constructing "gravel packed wells". These were packed with gravel inside of a circular screen made of highly corrosion resistant metal to filter out the sand. This type of well has also been furnished by the Church Co. to towns and cities for municipal water supplies, at a cost far below that of dams and storage reservoirs. It has come to form a large part of the business of the Church Co., serving factories, office buildings, and municipalities. In 1919, Mr. Church was visited by a young man who was selling farm machinery. This was Mr. Hubert E. Stoddard, who within a month entered the employ of the Church Co. as Engineer.

In July 1951, Mr. Church died and the control of the company passed to Mr. Stoddard who incorporated the business in 1952. Mr. Stoddard is retired and Mr. Wm S. Duncan is President and General Manager. Much new equipment has been obtained, and special well development processes have been worked out, resulting in substantial water supplies for entire communities, some of them with several hundred houses. Further geological studies have revealed new sources of water supply, some of them at depths of from 500 to 800 feet. This water is very cold and is highly desirable for large air-conditioning installations as well as for municipal supplies.

A few years ago, a water company in Fairfield county proposed building a dam across Eight Mile Brook in Quaker Farms to create a reservoir of water, which would have flooded a large portion of that district. Much opposition to this scheme arose in Oxford, Middlebury, and Waterbury, some four hundred people appearing at the hearing before the Legislature Committee in Hartford. On the recommendation of the Church Co., test work was done for the water company on the Fairfield side of the Housatonic River. This resulted in the installation of several large diameter wells from which yields of over seven million gallons per day were obtained.

The Roy S. Sanford Co.

In 1953 the Roy S. Sanford Co., bought from Mr. Stoddard of the Stephen B. Church Co. the main house of the latter, with grounds immediately surrounding it. They do research work for the United States Government and for many of the large corporations of the United States, employing about twenty engineers.

ELECTRIC POWER COMES TO THE FARM

Before the coming of electric power to Oxford, dairy farming, in the present sense of the word, did not exist. Older residents say that in their boyhood, milk was virtually unsalable as such, and was therefore made into butter and cheese and stored either in an ice house or spring house. Once every two weeks or so, the farmer would hitch up his team and journey to a neighboring town and peddle his produce in the streets thereof. The skim milk was, of course, fed to the pigs, which once a year became a salable product.

Money, altogether was a very scarce article, and the fortunes of Oxford were at a very low ebb. The population of the town had fallen from its peak of one thousand seven hundred sixty three persons in 1830 at the height of the local industries to an all time minimum of nine hundred two in 1890. There was but a slight increase until between 1920 and 1930, when it began to spurt.

In the year 1918 there came about what might be termed a revolution in Oxford, namely the extension of the Connecticut Light and Power Co's electric power lines into both Oxford Center and Quaker Farms; so giving the farmer the electric milk chiller. And about the same time the motor truck came into general use, the combination of the two things making it possible to ship milk safely to a distance.

Later, the Connecticut Milk Producers Association was formed, providing transportation and marketing facilities, and modern dairy farming was born.

The Connecticut Light and Power Co.

In the chapter on Bridges, we have already given a description of the Hydro-Electric power station of the Connecticut Light and Power Company on the Housatonic River at Stevenson. The power house itself, being at the Stevenson end of the dam, cannot, strictly speaking, be considered as one of the industries of the Town of Oxford. But as one half of the dam and one half of the reservoir (Zoar Lake), and all of the new floodgates, are in Oxford, we give it this mention and repeat the main data for convenience.

- Dam. Located at River Mile 19.3
- Concrete gravity type.
- Maximum Base width, 81 feet.
- Maximum height to crest elevation 122 feet.
- Length 1213 feet.
- Output capability 28,750 kilowatt hours.
- Pond. Length at crest elevation, 10 miles.
- Power Plant. 3 Turbo-generators, 7000 K.W. each.
- 1 Turbo-generator, 7750 K.W.
- Annual output 95,650,000 kilowatt hours.
- Work started, during summer of 1917.
- First unit in operation Nov. 24, 1919.

CHAPTER 41

THE OXFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

On December 17, 1940, 18 to 20 people gathered together in the Oxford Hotel to talk about forming a Fire Department for the town. On May 9, 1941, official recognition was given this department and the Selectmen of the town appointed Frank Allen as the first Fire Chief for one year.

The charter members were:

Le Roy Barry	Joseph Kluzinsky	Louis Tomlinson
Edwin Cassidy	Charles Kirk	Bert Tucker
Raymond Godshall	Joseph Magda	Alvin Treat
Cecil Cropper	Earle Oleson	Carleton Treat
Croft Fray	Joseph O'Donavan	Robert Treat
Gilbert Ives	Clark Pope	Cyrus Shelton
John Kryszkiewicz	Charles Pope	William Wheeler
Andrew Kluzinsky		

They met twice a month and for almost a year drilled with the Seymour Fire Department. Any male citizen, 18 years or more could belong to this group.

The first Fire House was the Riverside Fire House and a little later the Center Fire House and the Quaker Fire House were established. The first piece of equipment was a booster pumping unit. The town voted the money for this apparatus on February 11, 1942.

The first serious fire for the new department to handle occurred at the home of Randall Minor, situated then across the road from the present Town Clerk's Office, in December, 1941. The only equipment was a fire extinguisher and pails for nearby water. The new Fire Department distinguished itself by keeping the fire under control until all the furniture was moved out of the house, but the house was a complete loss. The town, because of this catastrophe, was awakened to the need for the town to be protected against the possibility of fire damage. There were soon three volunteer fire companies, one for each section of the town, and fire equipment was gradually furnished.

At first badges were worn to label these fire fighters, later helmets, boots, coats, etc. were added.

The officers were Fire Chief and two Assistants to cover the whole town. Each Company had its own officers, Captain, Lieutenant, Secretary, and Treasurer.

1942

Frank Allen - Chief
 Clarence Roberts - Asst. Chief
 Samuel Owens - Asst. Chief

1944

Frank Allen - Chief
 Clarence Roberts - Asst. Chief
 Franklyn Sanford " "

1946

Frank Allen - Chief
 Earle Oleson - Asst. Chief
 William Downs " "

1948

Same

1950

Same

1952

Charles DeBisschop - Chief
 Earle Oleson - Asst. Chief
 Merwin Terrill " "

1954

Same

1956

Same

1958

Same

1960

Earle Oleson - Chief
 Dorrance Perry - Asst. Chief
 Joseph Madga " "

1943

Same

1945

Same

1947

Frank Allen - Chief
 Earle Oleson - Asst. Chief
 William Beardsley - Asst. Chief

1949

Earle Oleson - Chief
 William Beardsley - Asst. Chief
 Charles DeBisschop " "

1951

William Beardsley - Chief
 Earle Oleson - Asst. Chief
 Charles DeBisschop - Asst. Chief

1953

Same

1955

Charles DeBisschop - Chief
 Earle Oleson - Asst. Chief
 John Duda " "

1957

Earle Oleson - Chief
 John Duda - Asst. Chief
 Eugene DuPaul - Asst. Chief

1959

Earle Oleson - Chief
 Dorrance Perry - Asst. Chief
 Eugene DuPaul " "

Honorary membership has been awarded for special services to

Carl Eckstrom and to Robert Hawkins. These were given the title of Lieutenant. Social membership was given to any townsman who supported the department in an inactive manner.

The early minutes of the Fire Department give interesting sidelights to the Department's growth. For instance, when a motion was made to buy a Fire Bell, the group agreed to buy it, "provided it wasn't stolen property". Another time the Fire Truck couldn't be used because it was snowed in during a storm. Charles Pope, discussing this incident at a meeting assured the Company that the road to the truck "will be kept plowed by the town plow".

Telephone operators were used to spread the news of a fire to the volunteers, next the Round Robin system meant a faster report, with Charles Kirk informing several key men and each of these informing several other active men of the location of the fire. The next advance which the firemen are hoping to be able in the future to use is Plextron, a radio alerting system.

The first fire truck, to meet underwriters' specifications was bought in 1946. Three sirens are now in use and increasingly the town votes to accept waterholes in several town locations to add to the needed water supply.

A very necessary help is furnished by the Women's Fire Auxiliary for each Company, in furnishing coffee for the volunteers at fire fighting.

The town also now has twelve Fire Policemen appointed by the Selectmen - four for each district. These men enforce all regulations regarding fire protection in public and private buildings and have all the powers of policemen at a fire.

CHAPTER 42

OXFORD LIONS CLUB

In May, 1951, a branch of the International Association of Lions Clubs was formed, in Oxford with Southbury as the sponsoring club. This is a service club which is non-political, non-sectarian. Its members are invited by invitation only. It is a club devoted to recognizing community needs and developing means of meeting them. At that first meeting Frederick R. Bice, Jr. was elected the club's first President; with Thaddeus Stoddard, first Vice-President; Nicholas Posypanko, Second Vice-President; Edward Dains, Third Vice-President; Franklyn Sanford, Secretary; Nicholas Madorno, Treasurer; Robert Moselle, Tail-Twister; and Evo Gabianelli, Lion Tamer.

It was decided to have meetings on the second and fourth Wednesday of each month. The first membership group consisted of William Fox, Edward Dains, George Flint, Frederick Bice, Franklyn Sanford, and Gerald Boudreau. Their meeting place was one of the inns in Town.

The Southbury Club presented them with a gong and a gavel at an early meeting.

The club consists of several committees such as:

Attendance	United Nations	Program
Agriculture	Greeter	Entertainment
Civic Improvement	Convention	Publicity
Community Betterment	Lions Information	Health and Welfare
Safety	Membership	Finance

Since the club is primarily concerned with civic service it is interesting to note the services already contributed to the Town of Oxford.

Twelve Road Signs cautioning motorists in areas where children play in the streets.

Christmas Gifts to under-privileged children in town.

Improvement of Recreation Field in rear of School.

Instruments for School Band.

One book a month for the Oxford Library

March of Dimes

Aiding Legion in getting an Ambulance, before the Ambulance Association was started.

Light a Bike Campaign

Thousand of paper-back covers for Oxford School Books.

Money to Boy and Girl Scouts.

Bases for School Field

Hospital bed, Invalid's Walker and wheel chair for Residents of Oxford

Cleaning materials for Seymour flood evacuees plus funds to aid flood recovery.

Safe driving placques distributed.

Drinking fountain in back of school

Civic information booklet

Eye-Research Program, Glaucoma Fund

Telebinocular for Eye Tests at the School

Christmas to Southbury Training School

Aid in Dogwood planting in town.

Money to Friends of the Library

Money to Babe Ruth Baseball League

Money to Quaker Farms 4-H Club.

Money to Ambulance Association, Oxford Disaster Association.

Welcoming new families to town.

Decoration of Christmas Tree on Green.

Organizing Carol Singing for everyone in town.

House Decoration Contest with prizes

Sponsoring a Blood Bank

Trophy system for basketball competition

Contributions to Cancer Drive

Participation in Valley Health Survey

Liberty Bell ringing on Election day.

Oxford men who have served as President of this Club are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Frederick R. Bice, Jr. | 6. Edmund Schade |
| 2. Norman Husted | 7. Frank Mason |
| 3. Gerald Boudreau | 8. Arthur Hoyt |
| 4. Charles Lubin | 9. William Rice |
| 5. Albert Douillet | 10. Joseph Prokop |

One of the items in the Code of Ethics of the Lions Club gives a good description of what each Lion's Club Member bears in mind.

"Always to bear in mind my obligations as a citizen to my nation, my state, and my community, and to give to them my unswerving loyalty in word, act, and deed. To give them freely of my time, labor, and means. To build up and not destroy."

CHAPTER 43

SELECTMEN OF OXFORD

SELECTMEN FOR DERBY (INCLUDING OXFORD)

A complete list of the Selectmen for Derby from 1677 to 1798 (when Oxford was incorporated as a town) will be found in the "History of the Old Town of Derby", page 789.

In the year 1680 when Oxford was first settled, they were:

Edward Wooster, John Hulls and William Tonlinson.

Who the first selectman for Derby was who lived in Oxford is difficult to say until the year 1762, when we find the name of Capt. Zachariah Hawkins, who continued to serve through the year 1766.

When the incorporation of Oxford became imminent, about 1797, the selectmen for Derby were Capt. Joseph Riggs, Capt. Ebenezer Riggs, and Mr. Reuben Lumm, and in 1798, the actual year of the incorporation, they were: Reuben Lumm, David Hitchcock and Nathan Stiles.

SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF OXFORD

"that selectmen be authorized and impowered to settle controversy in such a manner as they adjudge best for the town"

1798

David Tomlinson
Charles Bunnell
Caleb Candee

1799

Caleb Candee
Charles Bunnell
Isaac Nichols
Joseph Lines
Azael Hide

1800

Caleb Candee
Charles Bunnell
Isaac Nichols
Justus Candee
Joseph Lines

1801

Joseph Lines
Isaac Nichols
Justus Candee

1802

Elijah Hawkins
Abel Wheeler
Justus Candee

1803

Philo Holbrook
D. Candee
Elijah Hawkins

1804

D. Candee
E. Hawkins
Caleb Candee

1806

David McEwen
Nathan Tomlinson
Daniel Finch
Silvester Higgins
Ebenezar Riggs

1808

David McEwen
Daniel Finch
Elijah Hawkins

1810

Elihu Bates
Charles Bunnell
Job Candee

1812

Charles Bunnell
D. Tomlinson
Abel Wheeler

1814

Lemuel Beardslee
John Bassett
Charles Bunnell

1816

Lemuel Beardslee
Justus Candee
Jared Hawley

1818

Lemuel Beardslee
Jared Hawley
Chauncey Hatch

1820

Lemuel Beardslee
Ira Sherman
Chauncey Hatch

1822

Elias Scott
Nate Wooster
Chauncey Hatch

1805

David Tomlinson
Caleb Candee
David Candee

1807

David McEwen
Daniel Finch
Elijah Hawkins

1809

Elihu Bates
Job Candee
Philo Beecher

1811

Charles Bunnell
D. Tomlinson
Abel Wheeler

1813

Abel Wheeler
John Fairchild - John Bassett
Lemuel Beardslee

1815

Lemuel Beardslee
John Bassett
Justus Candee

1817

Lemuel Beardslee
Jared Hawley
Chauncey Hatch

1819

Lemuel Beardslee
Nathan Wooster
Chauncey Hatch

1821

Lemuel Beardslee
Ira Sherman
Elias Scott

1823

Elias Scott
Nathan Wooster
Charles Bunnell

1824

Chauncey Hatch
Abijah Hyde
John Coe

1826

Samuel Wire
Ira Sherman
Wait Bassett

1828

Samuel Wire
Ira Sherman
Sheldon Clark

1830

Hiram Osborn
Lewis Chatfield
Reuben Curtiss

1832

Lewis Chatfield
Hiram Osborn
Reuben Curtiss

1834

Roswell Cable
Alfred Harger
Sheldon Bristol

1836

Roswell Cable
Alfred Harger
Sheldon Bristol

1838

N. Wilcoxson
I. Hyde
Clark Botsford

1840

Clark Botsford
Elias Scott
David Clark

1842

David Clark
John Hull
William Gillett

1825

N. Fairchild
Ira Sherman
Samuel Wire

1827

Samuel Wire
Ira Sherman
Wait Bassett

1829

Hiram Osborn
I. Hyde
Reuben Curtiss

1831

Hiram Osborn
Lewis Chatfield
Roswell Cable

1833

Roswell Cable
Reuben Curtiss
Alfred Harger

1835

Roswell Cable
Alfred Harger
Sheldon Bristol

1837

Sheldon Bristol
Alfred Harger
N. Wilcoxson

1839

Levi Candee
Clark Botsford
N. Wilcoxson

1841

Russel Wooster
Eli Tyler
Ira Hawkins

1843

David Clark
William Gillett
Alfred Harger

1844

Alfred Harger
William Gillett
Sheldon Church

1846

Burritt Davis
Samuel Wire
Ira Hyde

1848

Nathan Fairchild
Alfred Harger
Everett Booth

1850

Nathan Fairchild
Lewis Davis
Robert Wheeler

1852

Nathan Fairchild
Lewis Davis
Henry Bidwell

1854

Robert Wheeler
James Buckingham
Benjamin Nichols

1856

Joel Osborn
Lewis Davis
Ephraim Smith

1858

Joel Osborn
Lewis Davis
Ephraim Smith

1860

Joel Osborn
Benjamin Nichols
Burritt Davis

1862

Joel Osborn
Benjamin Nichols
Burritt Davis

1845

Alfred Harger
Sheldon Church
Burritt Davis

1847

Burritt Davis
Joel White
Nathan Fairchild

1849

Nathan Fairchild
Robert Wheeler
George W. Morgan

1851

Nathan Fairchild
Lewis Davis
Robert Wheeler

1853

David Clark
Benjamin Nichols
Robert Wheeler

1855

Joel Osborn
Lewis Davis
Ephraim Smith

1857

Ephraim Smith
Lewis Davis
Joel Osborn

1859

Joel Osborn
Burritt Davis
Benjamin Nichols

1861

Joel Osborn
Benjamin Nichols
Burritt Davis

1863

Benjamin Nichols
Robert Wheeler
Wm. Church

1864

Benjamin Nichols
Robert Wheeler
John Davis

1866

Joel Osborn
Luther Fowler
B. Davis

1868

Joel Osborn
Benjamin Nichols
Egbert Warner

1870

Benjamin Nichols
R. B. Limburner
Joel Osborn

1872

Wm. H. Davis
Robert B. Limburner
Wm. O. French

1874

Robert Limburner
James H. Bartlett
Lewis B. Perkins

1876

Orlando C. Osborn
Robert Limburner
James Bartlett

1879

James Bartlett
John B. Pope
George R. Baldwin

1881

James Bartlett
John B. Pope
George R. Baldwin

1883

Frederick C. Candee
Clark A. Lum
George Baldwin

1865

Joel Osborn
Luther Fowler
B. Davis

1867

Joel Osborn
George Lum
Charles Perkins

1869

Joel Osborn
Albert D. Carrington
George Lum

1871

R. B. Limburner
Joel White
George R. Baldwin

1873

Robert Limburner
James H. Bartlett
David E. Riggs

1875

Robert Limburner
James H. Bartlett
Lewis B. Perkins

1877

James Bartlett
Lewis B. Perkins
John B. Pope

1880

James Bartlett
John B. Pope
George R. Baldwin

1882

George R. Baldwin
John B. Pope
Lewis B. Perkins

1884

Frederick C. Candee
Clark A. Lum
George Baldwin

1885

James Bartlett
Robert Limburner
Clark A. Lum

1887

James Bartlett
Clark A. Lum
Wooster B. McEwen

1889

Glover Cable
James H. Bartlett
Wooster McEwen

1891

Robert Limburner
Wooster McEwen
Cornelius C. Ryder

1893

Robert Limburner
Robt. J. Sanford
Wm. O. Davis

1895

Robert Sanford
Wm. O. Davis
Wallace G. Tomlinson

1897

Robert Sanford
John B. Pope
Chas. B. Johnson

1899

John B. Pope
Charles B. Johnson
Robert I Sanford

1901

John B. Pope
Frank H. Downs
Wm W. Hughes

1903

Wm O. Davis
John B. Pope
Wooster McEwen

1886

James Bartlett
Robert Limburner
Clark A. Lum

1888

James Bartlett
Clark A. Lum
Wooster B. McEwen

1890

John B. Pope
James Bartlett
Robert Limburner

1892

Robert Limburner
Wooster McEwen
Cornelius C. Ryder

1894

Smith C. Wheeler
Wm. W. Hughes
Wm. O. Davis

1896

Wm. O. Davis
Charles B. Johnson
Gordon Crofut

1898

William O. Davis
Robert I. Sanford
Charles B. Johnson

1900

John B. Pope
Frank B. Andrew
Robert I. Sanford

1902

Wm. O. Davis
John B. Pope
Wooster McEwen

1904

John B. Pope
Charles B. French
Wooster McEwen

1905	1906
John B. Pope	Wooster McEwen
Chas. B. French	John B. Pope
Chas. B. Johnson	Chas. B. French
1907	1908
John B. Pope	John B. Pope
Glover Cable	Nelson M. Cable
Eugene A. Wyant	Eugene A. Wyant
1909	1910
Eugene A. Wyant	John B. Pope
John B. Pope	Frederick W. Hubbell
Charles B. French	Wallace A. Tomlinson
1911	1912
Wallace A. Tomlinson	same
Frederick W. Hubbell	
Chas. B. French	
1913	1914
Wallace A. Tomlinson	Nelson M. Cable
Frederick W. Hubbell	Wallace A. Tomlinson
Nelson M. Cable	John D. Crofut
1915	1916
Frederick W. Hubbell	Frederick W. Hubbell
Nelson M. Cable	Nelson M. Cable
Frank B. Andrew	Albert K. Pope
1917	1918
Frank B. Andrews	Nelson M. Cable
Frederick W. Hubbell	Frederick W. Hubbell
Nelson M. Cable	Albert K. Pope
1919	1920
Robert I. Sanford	Hubert Wells
Frederick W. Hubbell	Wallace Tomlinson
Albert K. Pope	Nelson M. Cable
1921	1922
Thomas Schreiber	William Hubbell
William Hubbell	Knud Olsen (Christ)
Nelson Cable	Nelson Cable
1923	1924
William Hubbell	Oscar Tilquist
Charles Pope	William Hubbell
Nelson Cable	Charles Pope

1925

Nelson Cable
Oscar Tilquist
William Hubbell

1927

Jos. Lineweber
Chas. Pope
Wm. Hubbell

1929

W. Hubbell
Edward Rowland
Charles Pope

1931

Jos. Lineweber
H. Leslie Tomlinson
Chas. Pope

1933

Charles Pope
William Curtiss
Robert Sanford

1935

Clarence Roberts
William R. Curtiss
Charles Pope

1937

Benjamin Tilquist
Charles Pope
Clarence F. Roberts

1939

same

1941

same

1943

same

1945

same

1926

O. Tilquist
W. Hubbell
N. Cable

1928

Robert Sanford
Wm. Hubbell
Chas. Pope

1930

Edward Rowland
Charles Pope

1932

Richard C. Jacobs
Charles Pope
H. Leslie Tomlinson

1934

Clarence Roberts
William R. Curtiss
Charles Pope

1936

Benjamin Tilquist
Charles Pope
Clarence F. Roberts

1938

same

1940

R. Harold Treat
Benjamin Tilquist
Charles Pope

1942

same

1944

same

1946

Fred R. Bice Jr.
Charles Pope
Benjamin Tilquist

1947

same

1949

Fred R. Bice Jr.

Justus Booth

Gerald Boudreau

1951

Gerald Boudreau

Demitri Dytko

Fred R. Bice, Jr.

1953

same

1955-56

Fred R. Bice Jr.

Norman W. Husted

Joseph Bailey

1959-60

Norman W. Husted

David T. Schreiber

W. Wilson White

1948

Fred R. Bice, Jr.

Edward U. Miles

Charles Pope

1950

same

1952

Fred R. Bice Jr.

Justus Booth

Gerald Boudreau

1954

same

1957-58

Fred R. Bice Jr.

Norman W. Husted

William C. Kennedy

CHAPTER 44

TOWN CLERKS, JUDGES OF PROBATE, POSTMASTERS

TOWN CLERKS

“Present built on past hard work, faith, goodwill of generations gone by.”

1798	Eben Wooster	1860	Nathan Wilcoxson
1800	Hosea Dutton	1866	Burr Beecher
1803	Abel Wheeler (pro tempore)	1867	John Lounsbury
1812	Hosea Dutton	1868	Lewis Barnes
1826	Noah Stone	1900	George Hoxie
1829	Thomas Dutton	1905	John B. Sanford
1830	Noah Stone	1920	David Fairchild (re- signed 1941)
1833	Nathan Wilcoxson	1941	Richard Nyberg
1846	Nathan Fairchild	1948	Arthur Hoyt
1859	Lewis Barnes		

JUDGE OF PROBATE (SINCE June 4, 1846)

1. To admit wills to probate.
2. To grant intestate estates of persons died domiciled in their districts.
3. To call executors, administrators, Trustees, Guardians and Conservators to account for estates entrusted to their charge.

1846	Nathan Wilcoxson	1914-18	David Fairchild (acting)
1848	Noah Stone	1918	Edgar Harger
1858	Nathan Wilcoxson	1936	Edward P. Rowland
1866	Joel Osborn	1942	Eldridge Seeley
1867	Nathaniel Walker	1948	Michael Sheehy (acting for Derby)
1872	Lewis Barnes	1950	Aurin M. Ripley
1895	Walter Perry	1956	Ruth Ripley
1897	George Hoxsie	1958	George Wesley
1908	John Sanford		

POSTMASTERS IN OXFORD CENTER

List of Postmasters in Oxford Center, New Haven County, Connecticut, (from the records of the U. S. Post Office Dept. in Washington, D.C.)

The Post Office was established shortly before January 1, 1807 and was discontinued on July 7, 1903.

<u>Names of Postmasters</u>	<u>Date of Appointment</u>
Walker Wilmot	Jan. 1, 1807
David Cande	Apr. 25, 1810
George N. Candee	March 1, 1833
Henry C. Atwood	Oct. 30, 1834
Samuel Wire	April 18, 1835
Charles S. Scott	May 24, 1841
Harvey W. Upson	October 23, 1841
Samuel Wire	December 21, 1844
Ransom Hudson	February 4, 1847
Nathan J. Wilcoxson	November 11, 1847
Albert B. Dunham	June 20, 1861
Samuel P. Sanford	December 19, 1862
Nathan J. Wilcoxson	October 2, 1867
Charles H. Butler	August 4, 1869
Kate E. Butler	December 17, 1884
Charles H. Butler	June 18, 1889
Kate E. Butler	December 8, 1890
Charles H. Butler	July 17, 1895
Thomas S. Osborn	Sep. 8, 1898
John B. Sanford	March 10, 1903

After July 7, 1903, there was no post office in Oxford Center until the "Oxford Rural Post Office Station" was opened on February 2, 1959 with Mrs. Joseph J. Steinecker as Postmistress.

POSTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS OF 1873. SEC. 34

"No post-office shall be located in a bar-room, or in any room directly connected therewith; nor must any mail be opened, or any mail-matter delivered, in any room in which liquor is sold at retail."

Mr. Xenophon P. Smith, Librarian, Post Office Dept. Library, Washington, D.C. says in a letter dated March 20, 1959, that this is the first mention of prohibition of post offices in places where liquor is sold.

CHAPTER 45

THE OXFORD AMBULANCE ASSOCIATION INC.

On the eleventh of October, 1954, a group of people including selectmen of the town, delegates from the American Legion, Lions Club, Center, Quaker Farms, and Riverside Fire Departments met in Oxford to talk about the possibility of getting and maintaining an ambulance for the care of people of the town. Those present were Selectman Frederick R. Bice, Gerald Boudreau, Charles De Bisschop, William Yagovane, Joseph Prokop, Arthur Hoyt, F. R. Sanford, Jesse Booth, Henry Mozijko, Eugene DuPaul, William Fox Jr. and Charles Lyons. Leonard Gendler of the Southbury Ambulance Society explained the steps of organization.

The Town of Beacon Falls had offered a used ambulance to Oxford for the sum of \$1. So the Oxford Ambulance Association was started and the name given to the newly acquired ambulance was The Oxford Community Ambulance. It opened active membership to any male resident 18 or more years of age, who held a valid first aid certificate. At that meeting, it was found that only three of those present held a valid first aid card.

The first officers elected were

Joseph Prokop, President	F. R. Sanford, Secretary
Charles DeBisschop, Vice President	Arthur Hoyt, Treasurer

The Center Fire Co. houses the ambulance and a private phone and extension has been placed in the Oxford House for calls. Great credit goes to Mrs. James DeMaio who records the request for aid and gets three active members for drives to the hospital. Men sign for night or day driving. This means that townspeople get immediate response when they call for help.

Drives for money to support the organization began in Oxford as an annual event. Sustaining membership means the payment of \$1. annually. First aid classes for members have been given each year and lectures with picture slides have been arranged with officers of the State Police Training School.

So in an extraordinary short time, Oxford had for its own an organization to equip, house, maintain, and operate an ambulance without profit to be used as transportation for the sick, injured or disabled, at no cost for the individual. The Association was incorporated March 14, 1956.

The following are drivers for the ambulance (1960):

F. R. Sanford	Stian Christensen
Joseph Prokop	Henry Mozejko
Arthur Hoyt	Edward Oczkowski
Frank Duda	John Vander Laan
Joseph Duda	Walter Magda
Frank Ladyko	Eugene Du Paul
John Magda	Charles De Bisschop
Joseph Magda	Albert Arcuri
Robert Moselle	Walter Karwacki
Harold Woolard	Ernest Santerre
Eric Tallberg	Edwin Pfeilschifter

The very first call, October 9, 1954, was to take home from Griffin Hospital Mrs. Matilda Hricko of Oxford Road with Joseph Prokop and William Fox Jr. as drivers. Calls have increased to the extent that in 1959, the ambulance answered 260 requests.

Oxford is proud of this free service which is handled by such a capable and devoted group. The adult population of Oxford is about 2150. In 1960, 629 or only 34.2% of these townspeople responded with support which makes this service possible.

CHAPTER 46

BOY SCOUTS

Oxford Boy Scouts, Troop 1 was organized in 1933, with Rev. Henry S. Douglas, pastor of the Episcopal churches in Oxford as Scoutmaster, with Randall K. Minor as Assistant.

The first boys in the troop were:

Edwin Cassidy	Walter Magda
Blair Clark	Richard Miles
Clement Clark	Joseph Makunias
Edgar Clark	Michael Moskwa
Ray Douillet	George Renker
Albert Douillet	Raymond Renker
Walter Gray	Edwin Robinson
Milton Larson	Stanley Rzesutek
Warren Liebscher	Andrew Tuzik
Arnold Liebscher	Joseph Tuzik
Joseph Magda	John Tuzik

The Oxford Troop Committee in 1933 consisted of:

William J. Houlihan	Cyrus J. Shelton
Edward P. Rowland	Charles P. Pope
Atwater Treat	

The boys were fortunate to have Rev. Douglas as their first leader. He held the Eagle Scout Badge, the Hornaday Medal, the Silver Beaver Award and the 25 year Veteran recognition for his devotion to Scouting. He exemplified the words in the Scout's promise:

"On my honor I will do my best
To do my duty to God and my country, and to obey the Scout law:
To help other people at all times;
To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight."



A BIT OF OXFORD THAT IS GONE

On the west side of the Southbury Road, (Route 67), between Governor's Hill Road and the present Oxford House, for many years there stood three houses, all of which are now gone. These are shown on a map of Oxford Center, as an insert on a map of Naugatuck published in 1868. The first house north of Governor's Hill Road was that of the Rev. Mr. Chamberlyn, at that time pastor of the Oxford Congregational Church. The second belonged to Nathan J. Wilcoxson, the first Judge of the Oxford Probate Court, and the third house was owned by his daughter, Mrs. Egbert Z. Warner.

Judge Wilcoxson's second wife was Maria Louisa McEwen, daughter of David J. McEwen, who conducted a boarding school in his house on Hog's Back Road. After the Judge's death, in 1882, Mrs. Wilcoxson turned her house into a small inn, running it for some years, (possibly until her death in 1892). She is said to have been famous for her dinners. Then the inn was taken over by Mr. George B. Crofut and he named it "Crofut's Inn." He was followed by Mr. Patrick J. Mahony of Ansonia, who ran the inn until his death in 1931.

The house just north of Governor's Hill Rd. burned down, and the Inn and the house north of it were torn down at the time that the highway was widened about the time of Mr. Mahony's death.

From the style of the architecture of the building, as shown in the illustration, it is likely that the main building was erected about 1820-1830 and that the piazza was added some time between 1882, when it became an inn, and 1892 when Crofut took it over. The swinging sign which hung from the second story is now in the possession of the Connecticut Historical Society of Hartford, whose Asst. Director, Mr. Wm. H. Warren supplied the photograph. It will be noted that the sign shows a crow and a foot, thus spelling out pictorially the name "Crofut." It also shows a house with a lean-to running all the way across the end of the main building, and no piazza.

EPILOGUE

In the foregoing pages we have traced the progress of the town from its beginning as a community of small farmers and settlers, through periods of foreign commerce and small industries, returning again to small produce farming until the coming of the automobile and electric power made dairy farming possible. Now only a few dairy and poultry farms remain in Oxford, but the general trend is toward a community whose bread earners work in a factory in some other town. But the town still retains much of its natural beauty and serves as a peaceful and delightful home for its inhabitants. May it long remain so!

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APPENDIX

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INDIAN DEEDS

In an earlier chapter we have referred to certain tracts of land deeded by Indians, as Tracts A, B. C. & D. The boundaries of these tracts are as follows:

TRACT A

“This Indentar made this sixt day of August in ye year of our lord christ one thousand Six hundred eighty & Seaven and in the third year of the Reign of our Soveraign James the Second of england Scotland france & Ireland King defender of the faith &c; Betwen: cockopatonce; John bankes Jack chebrook; stasteckam. suskaquene; meshilling; tackamore; passekes; & mamosen; cockapotane; wamunka; wecalops; indians proprietars of wesquantack & pattatuck & of the Land in the great Neck at Derby in the county of Newhaven & Collony of Conecticut in Newengland one the one parties; & lieute: Ebenezer Johnson, edward woster & Abell Gunn agents for the town of Derby in the county & collony aforesd in Newengland witnesseth that we cockapotonce John banks; &c: the indians above sd for & in consideration of twenty one pound in good indian pay att Mr Nicholes Campes att Milford within six months from the date where with we doe confes, our selves fully satisfied contended & paid; have sold & by these presents have frely, clearly & absolutely Bargained & sold to the sd lieut eb: Johnson ed: Woster & Abell gunn together with the inhabetants of Derby propritors with them; one parcell of land being & liing in the great Neck; at derby:

Bounded on the Southeast with the four mile Brook & another little Brook yt fals into the littel River & Bounded North & North east with the little river that Runs into nagatack River; & Bounded north west & west with the eight mile Brook & Bounded west & South west with the west channel of puttatuck River & woodberry path from the six mile Brook to the four mile Brook; All this above mentioned land the above Said cockapatonce John Banks; &c indians & proprietares of the sd land doe fully frely Absolutely & clearly Sel & alienate to the sd inhabitants of Derby to gether with all its Rights priveleges, Apurtenances belonging to the premises or to any part or parts of them belonging or in any wise apertaining to them ther heirs executors admistrators or asignes for evere; & we the sd indians aforesd do bind our selves our heires & asignes to warrand aquit & forever defend the sd lieut Johnson &c & the inhabitants of derby & there heires & assignes from all other demandes; person or persones or indian layeing clayme to the premises; by from or under us; or by from or

under ours: & all & every other person or persons: claym or pretend-
ing clame to the above sd land & shall & will, for ever rattify there
right & titell as witness our hands & seals.

c cockapotonce: John Bakes his X mark
(seal)

witness by us

Joshua Lee Jack his mark (seal)

John Sristen ther not being Rome for signing doe signe on this side
to the within deed

Cockapotany	tackamore	witness
his X marke (seal)	his X mark (seal)	Nanoques
mesheling	Chebrook	his x mark
his) mark (seal)	(his mark (seal)	Carer
Stastoskhan	Wanxacun	
his mark (seal)	(his X mark (seal)	
Sunbaquene	Wetupaco	
his mark (seal)	(his X mark (seal)	

Pusseckes

his X mark (seal

Nanawag

his X mark (seal)

this deed entered the 12 of march in the
year 1708 /9

p me Abel gunn town clerk."

TRACT B.

Sharpe, in his "Oxford Sketches, Part 2" gives a deed which he
terms "the deed of the Wesquantuck and Rockhouse Hill purchase",
dated Aug 15, 1698, (eleven years after the deed dated 1687 which we
have quoted). This second deed reads as follows:

"To all to whom these presents shall come, Know ye that we,
Nieghbour Rutt Cockapaton Sachom Nonnawauk Gyousoon Keuxon
Raretoon Tazchun Corron Rashkannott proprietors of Wescantook
with ye consent off our Saggamore for twenty pounds in hand rec'd &
divers other & good consideration as thereunto moving have sold & do
by these prests fully and absolutely sell alienat & assigne set over
give gratn & confurme unto Wm Tomlinson senior & Junior and ye
Widdow Hannah Tomlinson James Hard, Jonathan Lume Timothy
Worster off Derby in his Majesties Colony off Connecticut & ye County
of New Haven & their heirs executors, administrators & assignes a
certaine tract off land call'd and Known by ye name off Weesquantook
& Rochoushill bounded South with ye four mile brook North with ye 5
mile brook East with Woodbury road yt now is & West with the Great
River for them ye aforesaid Purchasers their heirs and assignes to
have hold use occupy possess & enjoy as their own proper estate &
Inheritance from ye date of these prest forever without any manner
off lett hinderance molestation, disturbance denyall challenge clayme
evict'n ejection trouble or demand & wt soever off or from us ye

above said Indians or heirs executors or administrators or from or by any other person or persons for them by or under us affirming ourselves to be true Proprietors of ye above sd tract of land & yt we have in our selves good right & full power to sell ye same & do free & clear & freely & clearly acquitt exonerate & discharge ye above sd tract off land from all other & former gifts grants bargaines sales mortgages dowries joyntures wills entailes rents taxes & incumbrances whatsoever. And we do further engage & covenant firmly by these prests for or selves our Heires executors & administrators to & with ye afore sd purchas their Heires & assigns to signe seal & deliver any other & former deed & conveyance off ye afore sd Tract off land as ye sd Purchas their heires & assigns shall be advised by their Council learned in ye law

In witness wroff & for confirmation off all wch wee have to these prests put to our hands & seales in Derby this fiftteenth off August 1698.

Signed sealed & delivered in	Neighbor Rutt X his mark
ye presence off us	Cockapatouch X his mark
Jno James	Nonnawauk X his mark
Eleazer Browne	Gyouson X his mark
Mawquash X his mark	Keuxon X his mark
Cheshconeeg X his mark	Raretoun X his mark
	Tazchun X his mark
	Rashkoinoot X his mark
	Thomas seet X his mark

The above nam'd Proprietors appeared before me & acknowledged ye above written Instrument to be their act & Deed ye date above
Ebenezer Johnson Justice

Ver a Copia

Entered March 19, 1700 /1701"

TRACT C.

"Know all men by these prests; That wee Cockapatane Saggamore Ahuntawa Sachem Will Doctor Rowanquossock Worrashquonot Tyachomo Robin Arkummi Will Toto John Toto Indians In confirmation of a mortgage made to Mr Nicholas Camp off Milford containing a certain tract off land lying & scituate within in ye bounds of Derby bounded as specify'd in that mortgage viz Southward with Derby Purchase Westward with a range off swamps near onto Moose Hill, Northward with a little River known & commonly cal'd by ye name of ye little River eastward with Naucatuck River wch is a parcell off land abt three miles square be it more or less & bought off ye Towne off Derby's Agts in yt affair viz Capt. Ebenezer Johnson Engisne Saml Riggs & Wm Tomlinson Senior for full satisfaction in hand received by us as ye above mentioned Indians and divers other good and

weladvised consideracons us thereunto moving have sold & do by these presents full freely & absolutely sell alienate assigne set over give grant and confirme unto ye Town of Derby by ye aforesd Tract off land for them their heirs & assignes to have hold use occupy possesse & enjoy as their own propertie from ye date of these presents for ever without any manner of lett hinderance molestation distrubance denial challenge clayme eviction ejection trouble or demand wtsoever from us or by any other person or persons from by or under us ye above mentioned Indians Affirming yt we have in our selves good right & full power to sell ye same fore mentioned Tract off land & do fre & clear & freely & clearly acquit exonerat & discharge ye afor sd tract of land from all other & former gifts grants bargains sales mortgages joyntures dowries wills entailes rents taxes & encumbrances wtsoever, In witness wr off & for confirmation off all wch we have to these prests put to our hands & markes the 5th of March 1701-2

Sign'd Seal'd & delivered in

presence of us

X

Arkumi his mark

X

Artowahood his mark

Jno James

Mary James

Cockapatane X Saggamore his marke

Ahuntawa X Sachem his marke

Will Dr X his marke

Rowanquosook X his marke

Warrathgonoot X his marke

Tijachome X his marke

Will Toto X his marke

Jno Toto X his marke

These above mentones Indians appeared before me ye day & date
above mentones & acknowledg'd this to be yr own act and deed

Ebenezer Johnson Justice

Entred ye 5th off March : 1701-2

per me Jno: James

Town Clerke."

TRACT D.

“Know all men by these presents that I Cockepetance Sachem of Paugaset together with Will: Doctor and Sissowecum all of us Indians proprietors of the lands in the north part of Derby bounds having received of Mr Joseph moss of Derby in the county of New Haven in the Colony of Connecticut in New england and Samuel moss his brother of the same town county & Collony; a certain valuable Sum of money to our full Satisfaction and contentment; have there for given granted bargained Sold Enffeoffed and formly made over unto the sd Joseph Moss and Samuell moss each of their heirs and assigns forever a certain parcell or tract of land in the precincts of the town of Derby afore sd, Scituate at a place known by the name of twelve mile hill Joining upon the bounds of the town of Waterbury on the north running from the twelve mile Stake, which standeth on the top of sd Hill with

an heap of stones above it; one quarter of a mile Eastward, as the line between the township runeth, which will make the length of sd tract of land half a mile Joining all the way upon the bounds of Waterbury, and to run from sd Stake an hundred rods South and So to be an hundred rods in width from the bounds of Waterbury Southward in every place throughout the whole length of half a mile; which maketh one hundred acars bounded north on the bounds of Waterbury and on all other sides with our own Indian land; and we the sd Cockepentance Will: Doctor and Sisowecum Indians native proprietors, do by these presents give grant bargain Sell Enffeeffe alienate and firmly make over, all the above named land with all the priveledges and profits thereof, as grass herbage timber Stone &c; unto the sd Joseph moss and Samuel moss their heirs and assigns forever in Equal proportion and partnership;

To have and to Hold occupie use and Improve as they shall think fit; without any interruption from us the sd Cockapetane Will Doctor and Sisowecum or any of our heirs or Successors; and furthermore we the sd Cockepetane Will Doctor and Sisowecum, do affirm our Selves to be Sole owners, of the above mentioned land and do for our Selves, our heirs and Successors covenant and promise to and with the sd Joseph moss and Samuel moss, their heirs and assigns to warrant and defend them and each of them in the peaceable enjoyment of the sd land against the lawfull claimes and demands of any other indian or Indians whomsoever; in confirmation of all the above written promises we the sd Cockepetanc Will Doctor & Sisowecum Set our hands and Seal this 13th of march Anno Domin; 1709 /10 in the ninth year of her majetyes Queen Anne of great Brittain.

Signed Sealed and delivered in presence of us	
Josiah Baldwin	Abraham tomblonson
Indian witness	Cockapetani his X mark (Seal)
Fow Heah his	Will Doctor his mark X (seal)
X	
mark	Sisowecum his mark X (seal)
Rowa his	
X	
mark	March 13th 1709-10

Then the Indian Subscribers of this deed personally appeared and did acknowledge the same to be their free and voluntary act and deed This deed recorded 15th day of march in the year 1710
p me Abel gun town clerk
before me
Joseph Treact Justice of peace”

OXFORD TAX LIST, 1792

The warrant was directed to Josiah Strong "Collector of the Town Rate of Derby, for the Society of Oxford", and who laid on an assessment of four pence on the pound. The warrant was signed by John Humphreys, Justice of the Peace.

Jabez Bacon		Moses Cande	31L-17-6
Enoch Baley	25L-16	Caleb Cande	77L- 3-9
Eliakin Bardsley	55L-10-6	Job Cande	29L- 3-6
Justus Barnes	18L	Abijah Chatfield	85L-13-3
Abraham Basset	62L-12	Benajah Chatfield	30L- 0-6
Edward Basset	20L-14-9	Gideon Chatfield	43L- 7
John Basset	54L- 6-3	Isaac Chatfield	38L-15
John Basset Jr.	41L-16-6	John Chatfield	21L- 2
Samuel Basset Jr.	30L- 6	Samuel Chatfield	31L-12
Truman Basset	10L	William Church	39L- 6-3
T. Miles Basset	28L	Abel Clark	22L- 1-3
Elisha Bates	44L-16-6	George Clark	24L- 9-6
Lewis Blackman	23L	Hezekiah Clark	57L- 7-6
John Botchford	20L- 5-3	Thomas Clark, Esq.	116L
Charles Bradley	10L-16-6	Thomas Clark, Jr.	79L-16-3
Isaac Bryan	49L-10	John Davis	53L- 5
Andrew Buckingham	26L-17-6	Elijah Durand	68L-16-6
Ebenezer Buckingham	46L-13	Joseph Durand	26L- 3
Ebenezer Buckingham Jr.	26L-12-6	Nehemiah Durand	35L-12
Nathan Buckingham	92L-9	Osee Dutton	7L- 2
Charles Bunnel	23L- 7-3	Abial Fairchild	65L-15-9
Isaac Bunnel	7L- 8-3	Nathan Fairchild	61L-18-9
John Bunnel	18L	Daniel Finch	27L- 9
Luke Bunnel	20L-19-3	Nathan French	48L 5-6
Reuben Bunnel	20L	Sherman Hatch	20L-11-3
William Bunnell	29L	Elijah Hawkins	53L-16-6
Benedict Burwell Jr.	18L	Silas Hawkins	39L- 6
David Cande	9L	Zachariah Hawkins	69L- 6-9
Enos Cande	2L- 1-3	Hial Hine	49L- 0-6
Gideon & Medad Cande	43L- 6-6	Ebenezer Hoadley	14L-15-6
Justus Cande	47L- 8-8	Joseph Hubbel	21L-16
		Richard Hubbel	39L-13-6
		Abel Hull	45L- 3-3
		Silas Curtis, Huntington	11L-12

Andrew Hurd	9L-19	Zadock Sanford	36L- 5
William Hurd	2L-19	Asahel Scott	21L
Abijah Hyde	85L-18-6	Jesse Scott	23L- 7
Abel Hyde	43L-18-6	David Smith	21L- 7
Daniel Hyde	26L	David Smith Jr.	24L-10
Joseph Hyde	46L- 9	David Smith 3rd	24L
Nathan Hyde	19L	Elijah Smith Jr.	40L-12
Abner Johnson	29L-18-6	Gershom Smith	21L
Ebenezer Johnson, Jr.	111L-18-9	John Smith	22L
Ezra Johnson	21L	Jonathan Sperry	13L-17
Jeremiah Johnson	35L- 2-6	Josiah Strong	62L-15
Timothy Johnson	9L-18-6	David Tomlinson	114L-12
Selah Judd	33L- 5	Noah Tomlinson	22L-13
Elnathan Lake	5L-13	Noah Tomlinson, Jr.	43L-12
Dorman Leavenworth	21L	John Towner	53L-19
Amzi Lewis	5L-4	Joseph Towner	3L- 6
Asahel Lewis	12L- 4-6	Rachel Towner	1L- 4
Eunice Lewis	4L-18	Daniel Treat	45L-15
Silas Lewis	27L-15	Josiah Tucker	18L
William Lewis	22L-16	Samuel Tucker Jr.	23L- 4
William Lewis, Jr.	29L-10	Benjamin Twichel	41L- 2
Zebelon Lines	18L	David Twichel	10L
William Little	25L- 2	David Twichel	29L-10
Noah R. Lyman	20L-18	David Twichel Jr.	32L- 8
Mary Merwin	59L-11-3	Ebenezer Twichel	26L- 9
Lewis Mynott	18L-18	John Twichel	49L- 8
Isaac Nichols	104L-15	Joseph Twichel	87L-10
Jared Osborn	39L- 1	Stephen Warner	2L-16
Joseph Osborn	53L-1-6	Josiah Washburn	91L-17
Joseph Osborn Jr.	40L-15	James Wentworth	21L
Joshua Osborn	31L	Elisha Wheeler	80L-19
Thomas Osborn	133L-9-9	Samuel Wheeler	39L- 5
Nathan Pangman	32L-2-6	Samuel Wheeler, Jr.	6L-15
Daniel Perkins	48L-19	Walker Wilmott	18L-10
Ethel Perkins	55L-15-6	Charles Wooden	46L-15
Ethel Perkins	1L-10	David Wooden	18L
Roger Perkins	38L- 7-6	Salmon Wooden	29L-9
Gideon Perry	72L-13-9	William Wooden Jr.	4L-16
James Perry	1L	Susannah Woodruff	79L- 9
James Perry & Son	52L-16-6	Arthur Wooster	119L- 5
Eli Person	50L-17	Ebenezer Wooster	27L- 2
Anne Riggs	59L-4-6	Elisha Wooster	21L
David Riggs	14L-17	Isaac Wooster	
Ebenezer Riggs	69L-18	John Wooster, Esq. and	
Edward Riggs	29L- 8	son	133L- 5-6
John Riggs	107L- 6	Joseph Wooster	72L- 8
Moses Riggs	38L- 7	Nathaniel Wooster	23L-11-3
Samuel Riggs	27L	Nathan Wright	21L

ASSESSMENTS

Gideon and Medad Cande	5	Josiah Strong	15
Job Cande	5	David Tomlinson	25
Dr. Osee Dutton	10	Noah Tomlinson	5
Hial Hine	5	Nathaniel Wooster	5
Jesse Scott	5		

The foregoing is a true copy taken out of Derby Grand List of the year 1792.

Test. John Humphrey, Clerk

"The Isaac Bunnell named in this list is supposed to have been the one who enlisted at Waterbury and served in the Revolutionary War."

A later list of taxpayers without date, but which seems to have been made in 1795 contains seventy-one new names, as follows:

Simeon Andrews	Andrew Hierd, Stratford	Lewis Riggs
Abraham Beecher	Samuel Hitchcock	Abigail Shelton
Isaac Beecher	Joseph Holbrook	Richard Smith
Deacon Daniel Bennit	Abigail Johnson	Samuel Smith, Jr.
Gideon Buckingham	Daniel Johnson	Charles Strong
Isaac Bunnell, Jr.	William Jordain	Aaron Thorp
Benedick Burritt	John Lewis	Edmund Treat
Daniel Candee	Samuel Lewis	Philo Treat
Nehemiah Candee	Naboth Osborn	Israel Trowbridge
Samuel Candee	Samuel Patterson	Daniel Tucker, Jr.
Eli Chatfield	Mary Perkins	Gideon Tucker
Oliver Chatfield	Arthur Perry, Ripton	Samuel Tucker, Sr.
John Churchel	Yelverton Perry	Gideon Tuttle
Silas Constant	David Person	Enoch Twitchell
Joseph Davis	Nathan Persons	Jabez Twitchell
John Durand	Ebenezer Plant	David Wells
David Fabrique	Richard Plat	Robert Wheeler
Thomas Fling	Stephen Plat	John Williams
Amos Fox	Capt. Ebenezer Riggs	Daniel Wilmot
John Goodsell	Dea. Ebenr Riggs	David Woodruff
John Griffin	James Riggs	Abel Wooster
Edward Hawkins	John Riggs, Jr.	Joseph Wooster, Jr.
John Hawkins	Joseph Riggs	Thomas Wooster
John Hide		

This second list contains the names of: Ethiel Perkins, moved to Vermont 1795 Timothy Johnson, died Aug. 29, 1796, so that the list would appear to have been made out early in 1795.

Sharpe says "An old and faded manuscript, attested by H. Dutton, Town Clerk, as a true copy of the taxable lists of the town of Oxford

for 1802 contains 83 names; and the rate was two mill on the dollar

The highest on the list was David Tomlinson, Esq. who paid a tax of \$6.49. The next in amount of taxes were Capt. Hawkins, John Towner, David McCune, E. Fairchild, Aurelius, and Joseph Hyde, Elijah Durand, Wait Garrett and Truman Bassett, Joel Perry was the collector”

Ephraim Andrews	James Pangman	Naboth Osborn
John Bellamy	Capt. Nathl Pangman	Samuel Osborn
Joel Buckingham	David Smith 3d Good Hill	Sarah Osborn
Isaac Bunnell	David Smith 4th Punkups	Elizabeth Osborn
Wm Bunnell	John Smith	Gideon Perry
Luke Bunnell	Wm Smith	James Perry
Truman Bunnell	Isaac Smith	James Perry, Jr.
Cother Beardsley	David Tomlinson, Esq.	Josiah Perry
Jared Beardsley	Zalmon Tomlinson	Caleb Tomlinson
Lemuel Beardsley	Cyrus Cande	Nathan Tomlinson
Clark Beardsley	Daniel Cande	Josiah Tucker
Truman Bassett	Levi Cande	Twichel & Merwin
Moses Cande	Isaac Chatfield	John Towner
Wait Garrett	Benajah Chatfield	Rachel Towner
Salmon Griffin	Susannah Cornish	Simeon Towner
Peleg Griffin	Elijah Durand	Philo Thomas
Capt. Z. Hawkins	Nehemiah Durand	Francis Tomkins
Isaac Hawkins	Joseph Durand	Elijah Treat
Capt. Asahel Hyde	George Cables, heirs of	James Wheeler
Joseph Hyde	Isaac Cable	James Wheeler 2d
Daniel Hyde	Stephen Curtiss	James Wheeler 3d
Aurelius Hyde	Ebenezer Fairchild	Moses Wheeler
Joseph Hubbel	Lois Fairchild	
Hiram Johnson	Polly Fairchild	
Jeremiah Johnson	Eleazar Lewis	
Abner Johnson	Eleazar Lewis, Jr.	
Joel Perry	Wm Lewis	
Peter Perry	Ethel Lounsbury	
Roger Perkins	David Mc Cune	
David Perkins	David Mallory	
	Isaiah Mallory	

While the foregoing document is attested by H. Dutton, “Town Clerk, etc.” as “a true copy of the taxable lists of the town of Oxford for 1802,” it is hard to reconcile its 83 names with the 232 names of the 1792-1795 lists.

The bounds of Oxford Parish as laid out in 1741 and those of the town of Oxford in 1798 are shown on page 265. The town lost the

lost the triangle between Five Mile Brook and Four Mile Brook which accounts for some of the missing names, but nevertheless the list seems incomplete.

With a population of 1410 in 1800, if there were but 82 families the average number of persons per family would be 17, obviously unlikely.

CERTAIN INTERESTING DOCUMENTS ON FILE
IN OXFORD TOWN HALL

1. Resolve by the Assembly to incorporate the town of Oxford 1793
2. Resolve by the Assembly annexing a part of the First Society in Derby to the Society of Oxford. Passed October 1798.
3. Resolve by the Assembly Annexing a part of Waterbury to the town of Oxford. Passed October, 1803.
4. Resolve by the Assembly Annexing a part of Southbury to Oxford. Passed October, 1809.
5. Resolve by the Assembly dissolving the southwest school district in Waterbury and annexing portions of it to the school societies in Oxford, Middlebury and second in Waterbury. Passed May, 1836.
6. Annexing part of the Town of Oxford to the Town of Bethany Passed 1839.
7. Annexing School District in Oxford to Bethany School Society. Passed 1840.
8. Annexing part of Derby (John Smith) to Oxford. Passed 1844.
9. Naugatuck Constituted a Town 1844.
10. Establishing Boundary Line between towns of Oxford and Seymour Passed 1853.
11. Annexing part of Town of Oxford to Town of Seymour. 1854
12. Incorporating Beacon Falls School District in Oxford and Bethany. July 9, 1864.
13. Incorporating the Town of Beacon Falls. June 30, 1871.
14. Zoar Bridge, maintenance, of between Monroe and Oxford. 1897
15. Authorizing State Treasurer to pay Southbury and Oxford Passed 1927.
16. Authorizing Town of Oxford to issue bonds. 1933
17. Including highway in Truck line system. 1935

#1---Resolve to incorporate the Town of Oxford
1793

#2---Resolve Annexing a part of the First Society in
Derby to the Society of Oxford. Passed
October 1798

Resolved by this Assembly, That all that part of the said first society, within the following limits, (viz) beginning at the mouth of the brook at the south end of old Rimmon so-called and running up said brook to the south end of Pismire hill, from thence to the south end of Rock Rimmon, thence to the top of said rock, and on the top to the northend thereof, thence east to Woodbridge line, thence northerly on said line till it meets the line of Salem Society, and on said line of Salem Society to Naugatuck River, then down said river to the place of beginning, with all the inhabitants now residing or hereafter to reside thereon, be and the same hereby is annexed to, incorporated with, and made part of said society of "Oxford", with all the privileges and immunities thereof."

This tract all lies east of the Naugatuck River. The brook referred to is apparently Rimmon Brook.

#3---Resolve Annexing a part of Waterbury to the Town
of Oxford. Passed October 1803

Upon petition of Joseph Loveland and others, praying that the part of Oxford Society which belongs to Waterbury, may be annexed to the Town of Oxford.

"Resolved by this Assembly that the petitioners, and all the inhabitants living within, that part of said society of Oxford which lies within the limits of said town of Waterbury, be and they are hereby annexed to said town of "Oxford", and that in future the lines of said Oxford shall be commensurate with the lines of said society of Oxford, so far as said society lines are and run within said Waterbury: and that in future the petitioners and all others residing on such annexation be to all intents and purposes inhabitants of said town of Oxford."

#4---Resolve Annexing a part of the Town of Southbury
to Oxford. Passed October, 1809

"Resolved by this Assembly, That all that part of the town of Southbury lying within the limits of the first ecclesiastical society of Oxford be annexed and the same is hereby annexed to the Town of "Oxford" and is made a part of said town, and that all the inhabitants living and residing within the limits afore said, shall be annexed and belong to the town of Oxford, and they are hereby made a part of the town of Oxford with all the privileges and immunities of the rest of

the inhabitants of the Town of Oxford; and that the dividing line between that part of Oxford and Southbury aforesaid shall be the same as the dividing line between the first ecclesiastical society in Oxford and the first ecclesiastical society in the town of Southbury; and that those inhabitants now annexed to the town of Oxford be liable to pay all their proportion of the expenses of the town of Southbury up to this time; and that the town of Oxford take their proportion of the poor of the town of Southbury as they now exist in proportion as the lists of those within the limits aforesaid be, or to the lists of the town of Southbury, calculating in the lists of 1808."

#5---Resolve Dissolving the Southwest School District in Waterbury and Annexing portions of it to the School Societies in Oxford, Middlebury, and Second in Waterbury. Passed May, 1836.

"Resolved that the southwest school district in Waterbury be dissolved and disannulled, and that the inhabitants residing within the town of Waterbury and within the limits of said district be, and they are hereby, annexed to the second school society in Waterbury, and the inhabitants of the town of Middlebury residing within the local limits of said school district be, and they are hereby, annexed to the school society in Middlebury, and the inhabitants of the town of Oxford residing within the local limits of said school district be, and they are hereby annexed to the school society in Oxford."

#6---Annexing Part of the Town of Oxford to the Town of Bethany. Passed 1839

"Upon the petition of Oliver Buckingham and others, showing that they are inhabitants and freeholders of the town of Oxford, in the County of New Haven, residing in that part of said Oxford lying easterly of the Naugatuck River, southerly of Waterbury town line, westerly of the line of Bethany, and northerly of a line drawn from the junction of the north line of the town of Derby and the west line of Bethany, to the Naugatuck River, running in the same direction with the said north line of Derby to said river, and intersecting said river about one mile above Pines Bridge in said Oxford; that the distance from the above described territory to Oxford Center, is over a very mountainous region, and greater than to said Bethany; that they have but little intercourse with said Oxford, but most of their intercourse is with said Bethany:

Resolved by this Assembly, That said described territory, with all the inhabitants now residing, or hereafter to reside thereon, be and the same hereby is annexed to and incorporated with, and made a part of said Bethany; and all the inhabitants residing, or hereafter to

reside in said territory, shall have, enjoy, and become liable to all the rights, privileges, immunities and liabilities which the inhabitants of said Bethany may lawfully have, enjoy, or be liable to; and the inhabitants of said territory, and said Bethany shall have no claim to any portion of the surplus revenue, or the avails thereof, deposited with said Oxford, or to any part or portion of the donation made by Sheldon Clark Esq. to said Oxford; and the inhabitants of said territory and said Bethany shall pay a just and ratable share of all debts due and owing by said Oxford on the 23d day of May, 1839, proportioned to the Grand List of said territory and said Oxford, of 1838, not provided for by any tax already laid, except the costs of contesting said petition to this session of the assembly; and said Bethany shall assume to support and shall take and support, such part of the actual paupers of said town of Oxford, of date May 23d, 1839 as the grandlist of said territory so set off, proportioned to the whole grand list of said Oxford of 1838, bears to the whole grand list of said Oxford and in all other respects the said territory, and the inhabitants thereof, shall constitute a part of said Bethany, with all its privileges and liabilities. And in case any person or persons shall hereafter become poor, and would belong to said town of Oxford to support, by virtue of birth residence or in any other manner within said territory, such person or persons shall be maintained by said town of Bethany, to which they shall by this act belong to, whether at present within the limits thereof or not."

#7---Annexing Seventh School District in Oxford to
Bethany School Society. Passed 1840

"Resolved by this Assembly that the seventh (7th) school district of the Oxford School Society be and the same hereby is annexed and set to the Bethany School Society."

#8---Annexing John Smith and others of Derby to the
town of Oxford. Passed 1844

"Upon the petition of John Smith and others, inhabitants of Derby, in the county of New Haven, praying to be annexed to the town of Oxford, in said county, as per petition on file, dated April, 1843, more fully appears:

Resolved by this Assembly, That all that part of the said town of Derby, lying within the following described limits; viz: beginning at a heap of stones at the Housatonic River, thence running southerly of the late dwelling house of Timothy Russell, deceased, in a straight line to the center of the bridge on the Four Mile Brook which stands between the dwelling house of Ephraim Smith and Anson Gillett; thence from the center of said bridge to the south side of the highway in front of the dwelling house of John Smith; thence running on the southerly

side of said highway until it intersects the line of the town of Oxford, near the dwelling house of Stephen Baldwin; thence following the present boundary line of Oxford to the Housatonic River; thence following said river to the first mentioned bounds; with all the inhabitants thereof be and the same hereby is annexed to and incorporated with and made part of said town of Oxford, and entitled to the same rights, privileges and immunities as the town of Oxford.

Resolved that the collection of taxes etc. etc."

#9---Naugatuck Constituted a Town Passed 1844

"Upon the petition of William DeForest and others, praying for the incorporation of a new town, as will fully and at large appear by their petition on file, dated the 16th day of February 1844; which petition having been duly served on the towns of Waterbury, Bethany, and Oxford, was returned to and entered in the office of the Secretary of State according to law:

That the parts of the several towns of Waterbury, Bethany, and Oxford, lying within the following limits, to wit: beginning at the northeast corner of the society of Salem, in the town of Waterbury, and where the same adjoins the northwest corner of the town of Prospect, and thence running southerly by the line of said society to the town of Bethany, at a point called the Three Brothers; thence by said society line southerly to the southeast corner of said society, at a point in Bethany called Beacon Cap; and thence westerly in said town of Bethany in a straight line to Naugatuck River at the mouth of Spruce Brook, thence northwesterly in the line of said society in the town of Oxford to Bartis Corner; thence northerly in the line of said society as it now runs to the northwest corner of said society, and thence easterly in the north line of said society, as it now runs, to the place of beginning, with all the inhabitants residing therein, be and the same hereby are incorporated into a distinct town, by the name of Naugatuck. And the inhabitants aforesaid etc. etc."

#10---Establishing Boundary Line between Towns of Oxford and Seymour Passed 1853

"Resolved, That the line between the towns of Seymour and Oxford be and the same is hereby established upon the perambulation as reported under the date of May 4th A.D. 1853 by the persons duly appointed to perambulate and report the same."

#11---Annexing a part of the Town of Oxford to the
Town of Seymour Passed 1854

Resolved by this Assembly:

“That all that part of the town of Oxford lying southerly of a line drawn from the town bounds, standing between the towns of Seymour and Oxford in New Haven County, near the dwelling house of Mrs. Sabra Lindley; thence running in an easterly direction about one hundred and thirty rods, to a pile of stones on Diamond Rock, so called, thence running easterly about one hundred and twenty rods to a pile of stones about twenty rods from the Naugatuck Railroad; thence running easterly to a pile of stones with a stake standing therein, on the town line between said Seymour and Oxford, easterly of the dwelling house of Miles Culver, and southerly of the south end of Rock Rimmon, so called, be and hereby is incorporated in and made part of the said town of Seymour, and that the aforesaid lines and boundaries be the boundaries between said towns.”

#12---Incorporating Beacon Falls School District in
Oxford and Bethany Approved July 9, 1864

“Upon the petition of John Coe and others, inhabitants of the towns of Bethany and Oxford in the county of New Haven, praying for the incorporation of a school district of Beacon Falls, from portions of the sixth school district of the school society of Oxford and the seventh school district of the school society of Bethany:

Resolved by this Assembly: That so much of the seventh school district of the school society of Bethany and so much of the sixth school district of the school society of Oxford as is contained within the following boundaries, to wit: Commencing on the highway in the town of Bethany, four rods east of the house of Ransom Lounsbury; thence northerly to a point four rods west of the house of David Clark; thence by a line due north, to Naugatuck town line; thence by the Naugatuck town line, to the intersection of Spruce and Red Brooks, between the towns of Oxford and Naugatuck; thence westerly by line of eleventh school district in the town of Oxford, to the third school district in said Oxford; thence southwesterly by said third district to a point N59' W of a point two rods south of the house of John Smith; thence to said point two rods south of the house of John Smith, thence S85' E to the corner of George Twitchell's farm, south of Jay Benham's; thence southerly by highway to the southwest corner of the Home Woolen Co.'s land, thence S 58' E to the Naugatuck River; thence down said river to the place where it intersects with the Oxford and Bethany Town lines, thence easterly by the south line of the town of Bethany, to a point due south of the place of beginning: thence north to the place of beginning; and all the inhabitants residing within said

limits be and the same hereby is made and constituted a body politic and corporate, by the name of the Beacon Falls School District; and said district, for school purposes shall belong to Bethany."

#13---Incorporating the Town of Beacon Falls
Approved June 30, 1871

"Upon the petition of John Wolfe and others praying for the incorporation of a new town to be erected out of portions of the towns of Bethany, Naugatuck, Seymour, and Oxford, as per petition on file which has been duly served and returned;

Resolved by this Assembly: Section 1, That all those parts of the towns of Bethany, Naugatuck, Oxford, and Seymour lying within the following described limits and boundaries, viz: beginning at a point on an old highway known as Blackberry Hill Road, in the town of Bethany, which is intersected by a straight line extended and running on and in the northern boundary line of the homestead farm of Norman Peck, in Seymour, which boundary line is marked by a stone wall in part; thence running northerly in said old highway to a point about forty rods east of the dwelling house known as the Edwin Buckingham house, thence north fourteen degrees east one hundred and eighty-eight and one-half rods to a heap of stones on Perkins Land (so called); thence north three and one-half degrees east four hundred and twenty-two rods; thence north twenty-nine degrees west to a point on Beacon Hill Brook, opposite the saw mill of Amos Hotchkiss, to a heap of stones; thence following said brook westerly to the Naugatuck River; thence following the Naugatuck River southerly to the mouth of Spruce Brook on the west bank of the same; thence following the town line north-westerly to a heap of stones which marks the boundary line between Oxford and Naugatuck; thence running southerly to a large oak stump known as oak tree corner about eighty rods north of the dwelling house of Stiles Fairchild; thence in a straight line southwest to Hemp Swamp Bridge so called; thence in a straight line to a heap of stones on the east side of Diamond Rock (so called), which marks the boundary between Seymour and Oxford, said last line being the district lines of Rimmon district; thence easterly and northerly following the Oxford and Seymour town line to a point on Rock Rimmon in a line with the said northerly boundary line of the said home farm of the said Norman Peck; thence following on said line which runs a little south of east in a straight line to the point of the beginning; with all the inhabitants etc etc."

#14---An Act Concerning Maintenance of Bridges over
the Housatonic River Approved May 24, 1897

Sec. 1. "The Counties of New Haven and Fairfield shall maintain

control and operate as highway bridges, the bridge structure over the Housatonic River----known as Zoar Bridge between the towns of Oxford and Monroe. The expense of maintaining, operating, and repairing said bridge structures shall be paid in equal proportions by each of said counties, by orders drawn by the boards of County Commissioners of said counties upon their respective treasurers.

Sec. 2. Each of said towns within whose limits the abutment piers of any of said bridge structures are situated shall maintain and keep in repair highway and bridge approaches up to and as far as the abutment piers of any such bridge structure so situated within its own limits.

Sec. 3. Chapter CCXIV of the public acts of 1889 and chapters CCLXV and CCLXVI of the public acts of 1895 are hereby repealed."

#15---An Act Authorizing the State Treasurer to pay
the town of Southbury and Oxford certain
money in his custody. Approved June 22, 1927

"The State Treasurer is authorized and directed to pay to each of the towns of Southbury and Oxford, on application by them the sum of five thousand dollars from a fund deposited with him by the Connecticut Light and Power Co. as provided in Chapter 217 of the public acts of 1919."

\$16---An Act authorizing the Town of Oxford to issue
Refunding and Improvement Bonds.
Approved Apr 26, 1933

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

"Sec. 1 The town of Oxford is authorized to issue, under its corporate name and seal, bonds to an amount not exceeding in the aggregate the sum of forty-five thousand dollars, which bonds shall be denominated 'Refunding and Improvement Bonds of the Town of Oxford.' So much of the avails of such bonds as shall be necessary for that purpose shall be used in retiring and refunding the general indebtedness of said town, and the remainder may be used to defray the expenses of improvements in said town-----Such bonds shall bear rate of interest, not exceeding six per cent per annum-----as the Board of Finance of said town determine.

Sec. 7 This act shall take effect from the date of its approval by the legal voters of the town at a special meeting held for that purpose before Sept. 1933."

#17---An Act Including a Highway in the Town of
Middlebury, Southbury, and Oxford in the
Trunk Line System. Approved May 28, 1935

Be it enacted by the Seante and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

“The highway commencing at a point on Route 135, where the
present improved surface ends near the Middlebury-Southbury line;
there extending southerly over the most direct unimproved highway to
Southford, town of Southbury, at or near the intersection of trunk line
highway number 67 and Quaker Farms state aid road; then extending
southerly along said Quaker Farms state aid road, and substantially
along the most direct unimproved Oxford town road to its intersection
with trunk line number #34 at Stevenson Dam, is included in the trunk
line system of highways.”

ERRATA (1967)

✓ P. 33 - Line 6 should read: He moved to Derby at some time prior to 1698,

✓ Line 19 should read: Mary Riggs Twitchell was 78 years old in 1698 *b. 1620*

P. 47 - Line 42 should read: He died in 1934 and his wife, Fannie O. B. Gabler owned the hotel until her death in 1937.

P. 101 - Lines 39ff. should read: Mr. Robert Z. Hawkins purchased the property from Charles A. Yarrington in 1896. He operated the sawmill occasionally for five or six years, and this ended its use. Mr. Hawkins sold the property in 1908 to Charles N. Downs who sold it to B. Chandler Snead in 1915. Snead sold it in 1915 to the Diamond Match Co. which sold it to the Ansonia Water Company.

P. 108 - Lines 27-29 should read: The Capt. Wire Woolen Mill was located on the Little River just north of where the southern end of Chestnut Tree Hill Road joins Route 67.

P. 123 - Line 6 should read: He is buried in Pine's Bridge Cemetery, a secluded burying ground

P. 185 - Lines 39ff. should read: On June 5, 1950 the Town gave the Legion a quit-claim deed to the former school property of the Tenth School District, known then as "The Church School," and the Legion now makes it its home.

P. 203 - Line 10 (under Name of Church) should read: Naugatuck

P. 284 - Lists of Selectmen should read:

1947 Charles P. Pope	1953 Fred R. Bice, Jr.
Benjamin S. Tilquist	Gerald Boudreau
Fred R. Bice, Jr.	Justus Booth

1952 same as 1951

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